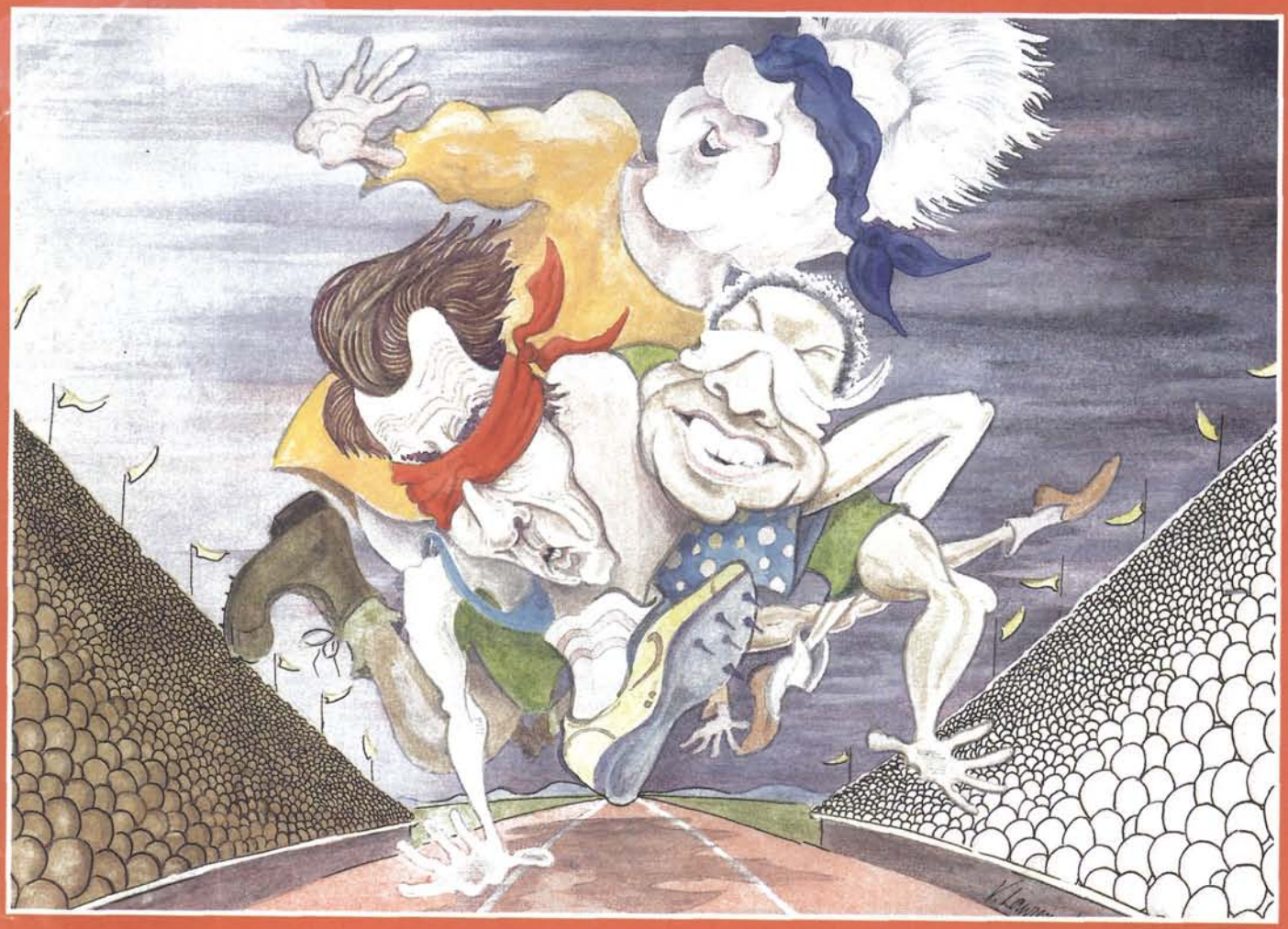
BOSNIA, DEMOCRATIC AND DYING—*THE EDITORS*

OCTOBER 7, 1996 • $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

The ValuJet Cover-up • Vendler on Denby • Mourning Tupac

The Race Not Run



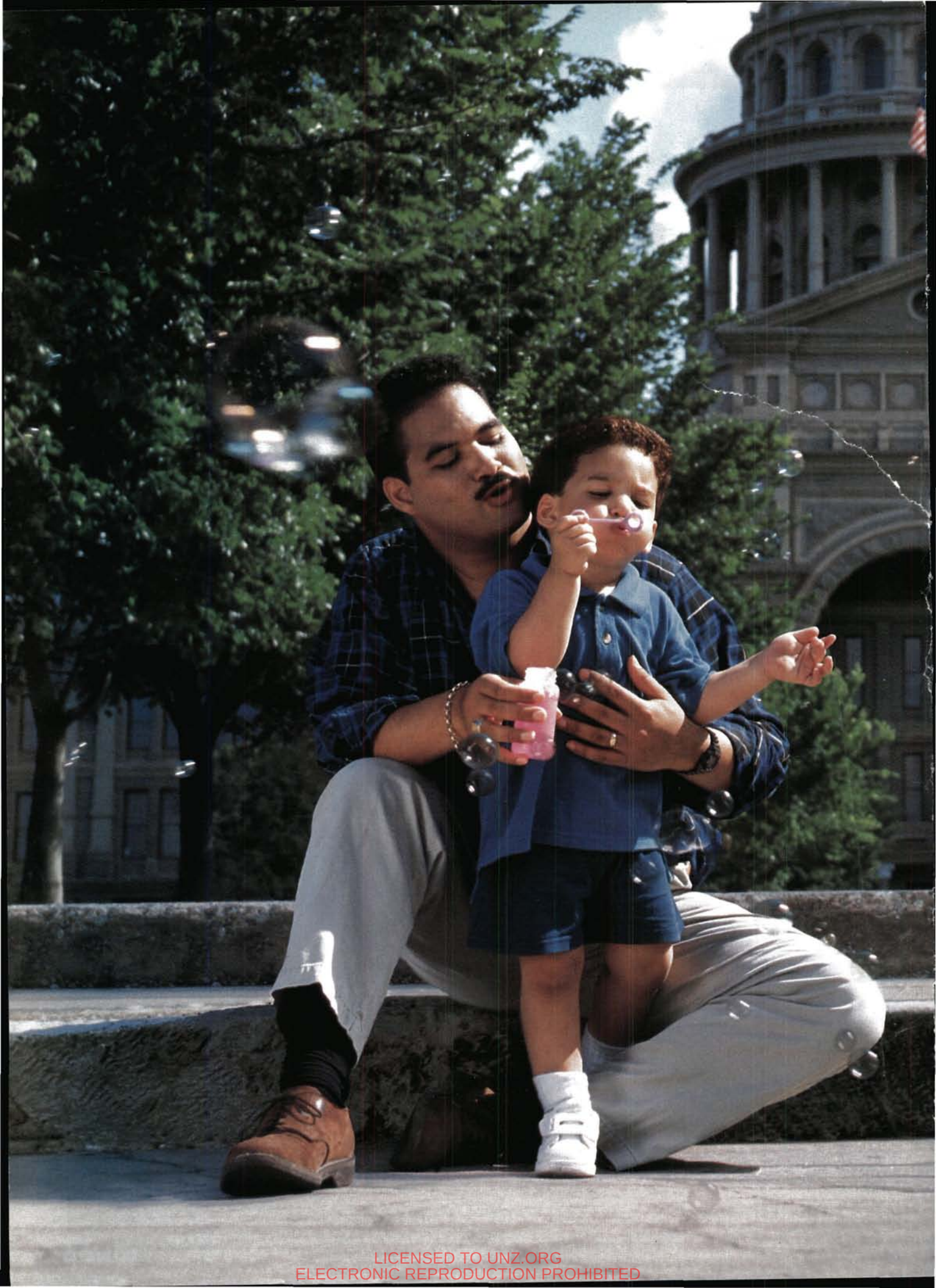
Clinton, Dole, Powell and ve Action Dodge

LBY STEELE

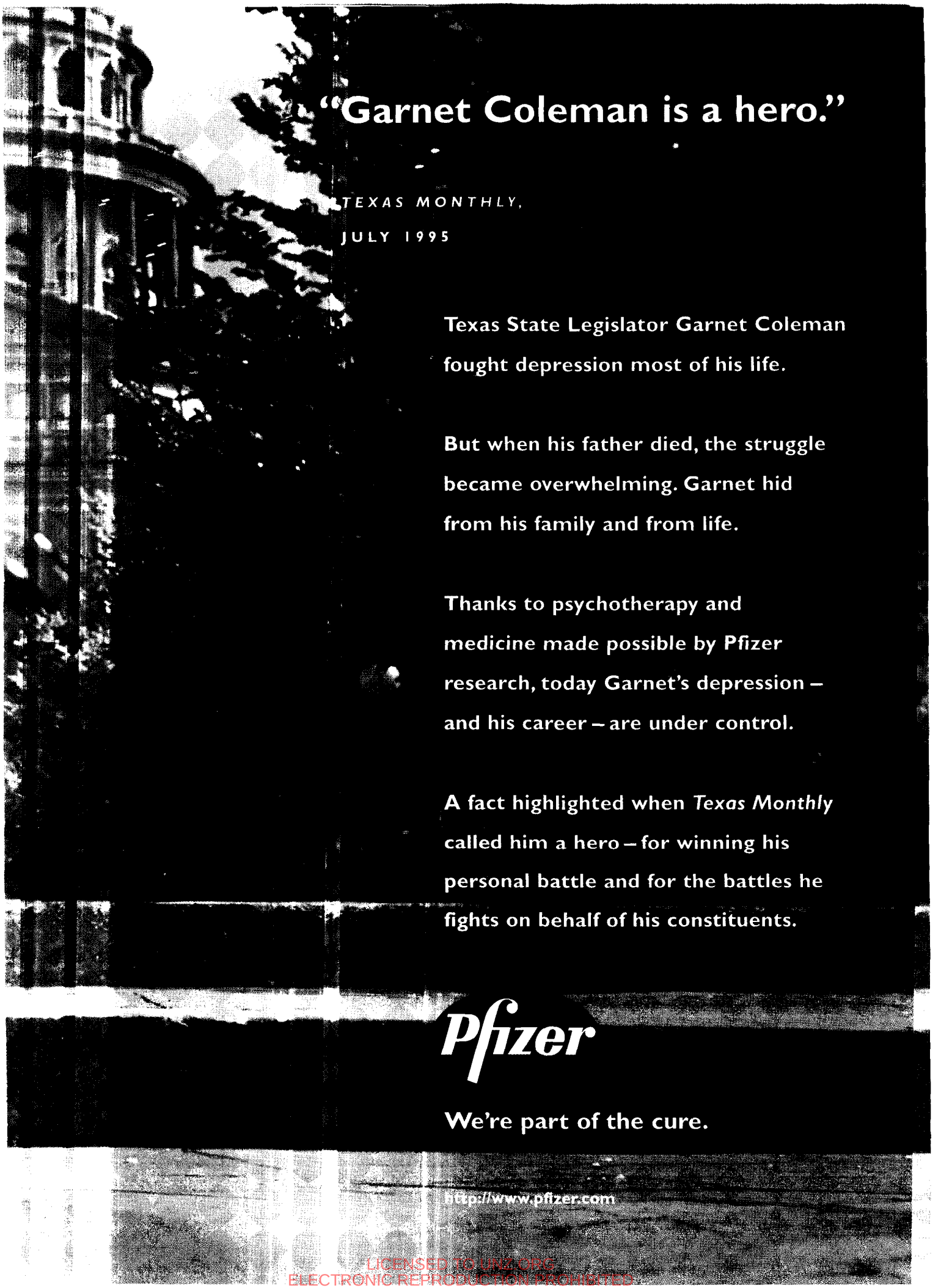
#BXBKDML ******* 3-DIGIT 757
#757558A11RY007# 012797
HO NWRE 409 S00461
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
ROY HAMMER LIB
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755-0111

0 787445 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


"Garnet Coleman is a hero."
TEXAS MONTHLY,
JULY 1995
Texas State Legislator Garnet Coleman fought depression most of his life.
But when his father died, the struggle became overwhelming. Garnet hid from his family and from life.
Thanks to psychotherapy and medicine made possible by Pfizer research, today Garnet's depression – and his career – are under control.
A fact highlighted when Texas Monthly called him a hero – for winning his personal battle and for the battles he fights on behalf of his constituents.
Pfizer
We're part of the cure.
http://www.pfizer.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®
FROM WASHINGTON

Over a barrel

Already Bill Clinton is declaring victory in round two of the confrontation with Iraq. Faced with the prospect of another airstrike in retaliation for attacking an American jet, Saddam Hussein promised he wouldn't repeat the offense. It seems the crisis has passed.

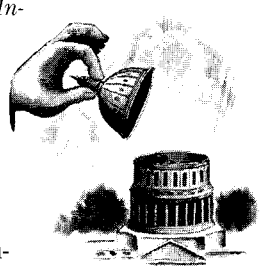
Not so fast. Saddam may have retreated for the moment, but he hasn't disappeared. He still has a trump card: oil. This time, the U.S. smartly staved off that fight, protecting Saudi oil fields by extending the no-fly zone to southern Iraq. Oil prices stayed steady. But the next time the tyrant on the Tigris could get lucky, a fact allies like France and Turkey recognized by paying deference and decrying the U.S. attack.

During the Gulf war there was much talk about the perils of American dependence on foreign oil. Once Saddam was crushed, or appeared to be crushed, those apprehensions disappeared. But the fundamental problem has not. For an administration obsessed with geoeconomics, it is startling that the Clintonites have devoted almost no attention to the rise in American oil imports. Instead, they have rolled over as the Republican Congress has slashed funding for energy research.

America's dependence on Mideast oil is daunting. U.S. demand in the coming years is expected to exceed demand as in the 1970s, when the U.S. suffered twin oil shocks. At the same time, U.S. production is shrinking yearly: onshore production of crude oil will decrease at an annual rate of 1.7 percent through 2015, according to the Energy Information Administration, the independent statistical agency within the Department of Energy.

Free marketeers don't see this dependence as a problem. The market will adjust for any swings in demand, they say. People will cut back when prices go up and drive prices down. And, if prices stay high, suppliers will rush to the market, and the glut will force the oil companies to cut prices. We've already tried price controls under energy czar James Schlesinger during the Carter admistration, and they failed miserably. Despite the doom-and-gloom forecasts after the Gulf war, America is sitting pretty.

These optimists see the war itself as a comforting precedent. Though prices briefly shot up to $40 a barrel after Saddam overran Kuwait, they soon stabilized as the Saudis stepped up production. But this was just good luck. Had Saddam immediately moved into Saudi Arabia instead of waiting in Kuwait, his 100,000-strong army could have seized Saudi oil fields located less than 200 miles from the Kuwaiti border and protected only by a Saudi national guard battalion of less than 1,000 men, as Robert J. Lieber pointed out in the summer 1992 issue of *International Security*. Saddam would have controlled 46 percent of the world's oil reserves. Neither Milton Friedman nor the Cato Institute could have stopped him from jacking up prices at will.



The potential for oil-threatening conflict in the region remains. Iraq has already attacked three of its neighbors—Iran, Kuwait and Israel. There is no reason to believe Saddam won't strike again. Instability could come from other sources. One scenario might be a joint Turkish-Iranian grab for Iraqi territory in the north. The ascendance of Necmettin Erbakan's religious Welfare Party in Turkey does not bode well for America's future ability to influence Turkey. Saudi Arabia may become another source of trouble, since Crown Prince Abdullah has made no secret of his unease with the U.S. As America's oil thirst continues to rise, an Abdullah-led Saudi regime could work more strenuously to resurrect OPEC and influence American policy toward Israel.

Then there is Asia, whose own need for oil could spell trouble for the U.S. China's energy demand is expected to double by 2010. In 1993, Chinese imports from the Middle East for the first time exceeded those from other Asian countries. South Korea and Japan are almost completely dependent on the Middle East for imports. Asia's demand for oil is bound to increase prices worldwide.

The dependence of China and other Asian countries on the Middle East is good news for Saddam. Iraq is seeking weapons technology, and China realizes it can exchange munitions for oil. With the upsurge in nationalism in China and in the Middle East, it may not be too much to predict that the Middle East will shift toward Asia and away from the United States. If there are two factors that can hold together disparate countries that fear and revile the United States, it is nationalism and mutually beneficial trade.

What can be done? In Asia, the administration has to ensure that China does not seize control of the South China sea lanes, the highway for almost all oil bound for Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The United States' performance in Asia, most notably in sending warships off the coast of Taiwan, has managed to keep the Chinese in check. The U.S. should also encourage the Association of South East Asian Nations to contest Chinese aggrandizement; the Philippines and Vietnam have already clashed with Beijing.

And the homefront? So far, Clinton's moves on energy policy have put politics before substance. No sooner did gasoline prices rise this summer than Clinton began to sell off oil from the 587-million-barrel Strategic Petroleum Reserve established for emergencies by President Carter. But this move won't make a dent in either the budget deficit or gas prices, since the U.S. consumes over 18 million barrels of oil per day.

The administration seems to have found its elixir in ethanol. In March, Carol Browner, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, announced tax breaks for fuel that "oxygenates like ethanol." But nothing oxygenates "like" ethanol. The ethanol bandwagon is a boondoggle; it does not fight smog and costs twice as much as gasoline to produce.

The challenge for the Clinton administration is to devise a coherent strategy linking oil and national security. Part of that strategy must be diminishing American dependence on foreign oil, which means promoting conservation and perhaps subsidizing public transportation, such as a Northeast high-speed rail network. That's an obvious job for Vice President Al Gore, who has been noticeably silent on these issues in the past few years. But safeguarding American oil also means presiding over a pax Americana rather than a lax Americana in the Middle East. The only thing Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt fear more than U.S. resolution is U.S. irresolution. In the short term, Clinton and Gore might work to bring 4 million barrels of oil per day back onto the market. They're located in Iraq, awaiting a regime sufficiently civilized to be allowed to sell them.

JACOB HEILBRUNN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

OCTOBER 7, 1996

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,264

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
PO Box 111
Mineola, TX 75755

Cover by Vint Lawrence for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 23.

4 **JACOB HEILBRUNN** TRB: OVER A BARREL Mideast crises end, their cause remains: oil.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** Dog trainers bark back, an ode to Prop. 187 &c.

9 **THE EDITORS** FREE AND UNFAIR Bosnia's democratic, less than edifying elections.

10 **NOTEBOOK** Dole's tax cut for rich kids, HHS in critical condition &c.

11 **ROGER SIMON** MIRACLE WORKER Pat Robertson, Bob Dole and a sinking campaign.

12 **STEPHANIE GUTMANN** EAST HARLEM POSTCARD: CLASS CONFLICT Liberals v. a girls school.

14 **ANDREW MEIER** QANDAHAR POSTCARD: STONERS The world's most fundamentalist town.

16 **MICHAEL LEWIS** CAMPAIGN JOURNAL: PARANOIA Among the Clinton conspiracists.

20 **MICHAEL FUMENTO** FLIGHT FROM REALITY Why did the Secretary of Transportation insist ValuJet was safe when his own aides told him it wasn't?

23 **SHELBY STEELE** THE RACE NOT RUN Bill Clinton, Bob Dole and Colin Powell have chosen not to take on affirmative action. They've rationalized their decisions with talk of racism and diversity, but the real impetus was something different: fear.

27 **RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG** GOAL LINE Why Kemp hasn't flip-flopped on preferences.

29 **NATHAN GLAZER** THE HARD QUESTIONS: RACE FOR THE CURE Census madness.

30 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: QUEST AND QUESTIONING Al Pacino is energetic in *Looking for Richard*; *Maborosi* has a restrained elegance.

32 **JED PERL** ON ART: LOVE, ETCETERA J. Carter Brown's circus of emotions and art in Atlanta.

34 **HELEN VENDLER** THE BOOBY TRAP *Great Books: My Adventures with Homer, Rousseau, Woolf, and Other Indestructible Writers of the Western World* by David Denby

38 **MARY KINZIE** POEM *Liberal Arts*

40 **JAROSLAW ANDERS** MODERNISM TO MADNESS *Insatiability* by Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz

44 **JOHN SUTHERLAND** THE LONG JOURNEY *Accordion Crimes* by E. Annie Proulx

46 **CINQUE HENDERSON** LOS ANGELES DIARIST: SPLIT PERSONALITY

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER

Executive Editor
MARGARET TALBOT

Senior Editors
ANN HULBERT, JOHN B. JUDIS, CHARLES LANE (On Leave), MICHAEL LEWIS, MATTHEW MILLER, ANDREW SULLIVAN, JAMES WOOD, ROBERT WRIGHT

Managing Editor
PETER BEINART

Legal Affairs
JEFFREY ROSEN

Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Poetry
MARK STRAND

Dance
MINDY ALOFF

Photography
LUC SANTE

Art
JED PERL

New Republic Books (Basic Books)
PAUL GOLOB

New Republic Online (Electronic Newsstand)
BRIAN HECHT

Contributing Editors
FOUAD AJAMI, ELIOT A. COHEN, STANLEY CROUCH, JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN, NATHAN GLAZER, ANNA HUSARSKA, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, GLENN LOURY, DOUGLAS G. McGRATH, LOUIS MENAND, DAVID RIEFF, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MICHAEL J. SANDEL, MAGGIE SCARF, ROBERT SHAPIRO, RONALD STEEL, E.V. THAW, TOM TOLES, TATYANA TOLSTAYA, MICHAEL WALZER, JACOB WEISBERG, SEAN WILENTZ, ALAN WOLFE, C. VANN WOODWARD

Associate Editors
JACOB HEILBRUNN, HANNA ROSIN, RUTH SHALIT

Design Consultant
ERIC BAKER

Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY

Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE

Production Manager
HENRY RIGGS

Assistant Editors
DEBRA DUROCHER, STEPHEN GLASS

Literary Assistant
MELANIE REHAK

Staff Writer
JONATHAN CHAIT

Reporter-Researchers
TARA ARDEN-SMITH, MICHAEL CROWLEY, CATHERINE ELTON, ROMESH RATNESAR

President and Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON

Vice President
JAMES J. McCABE

Associate Publisher-Advertising
JENNIFER BARRETT

Controller
CHRISTINA R. BONIFER

Circulation Director
CECELIA M. STEPHENS

Marketing Manager
SHABNAM K. SHARMA

Advertising Manager
ASHLEY H. COOPER

Accounting Assistants
JACQUELYN M. McCULLOUGH, JEANNINE DINGMAN

Advertising Assistant
CLAIRE P. STERN

Circulation Assistant
CAROLYN BERRY

Back Issues and Reception
MARGO JOHNSON

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 215, Number 15, Issue 4,264, October 7, 1996. (Printed in the U.S. on September 18, 1996.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 8 & 15, July 15 & 22, Aug. 19 & 26, and Sept. 16 & 23, 1996) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic Advertising Sales Office (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1996 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: tnr@aol.com Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Dogged

To the editors:

Regarding Hanna Rosin's sneering comment in "Smile or Else" (September 2) implying the absurdity of presidential candidate Bob Dole speaking before a group of "dog trainers" from Canine Companions for Independence: CCI is a service organization comprised of intelligent, educated and dedicated professionals. They train dogs to help improve the lives of those dealing with daily realities that most of us would consider major inconveniences, e.g. grand mal epilepsy, deafness and paraplegia. CCI is a non-profit organization; perhaps this will shed some light onto their interest in hearing what Dole and others who help determine national funding and attitudes toward altruism have to say.

PATRICE BEERS
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Mistaken proposition

To the editors:

Gregory Rodriguez's article "The Browning of California" (September 2) leads in with "Proposition 187 backfires." He then proceeds to cite data that belie this assumption. He admits that " ... many Latinos hail from countries that have manipulated anti-Yankee sentiment to promote national unity. In Mexico, becoming 'North American' has been seen as a betrayal of one's culture." He then presents figures showing a large increase in participation at the polls and a huge rush for citizenship by Latinos.

It seems to me that any law that results in the conversion of large numbers of American residents who previously had their hearts and souls in another country while refusing to participate in the most basic rights and responsibilities of their adopted country into active American citizens merits being etched in gold.

MOOR BRAUN
Henderson, Nevada

Africa-truths

To the editors:

I was not aware that TNR's art editor, Jed Perl, had a serious intellectual flair for African art. His essay "Formal Art" (September 2) was, I thought, superb in its deft grasp of what is aesthetically ingenious in African art. On the other hand, the observation quoted by Perl from the catalog for the Guggenheim Museum's exhibition—"Africa: The Art of a Continent"—that was made by my Harvard University colleague Professor K. A. Appiah was odd indeed. Namely: "Neither Africa nor art—the two animating principles of this exhibition—played a role as ideas in the creation of the objects in this spectacular show."

This is essentially a put-down observation on African art by Appiah, and, if I may say so, it is patently absurd. I submit that the masterful village art of what the French call *Afrique noire* (Negro Africa) is indeed first, art, and second, African.

That is, it is art in the generic functional sense that folk expressions and folk writings (chants, shouts, yarns, lore, rap, etc.) are art. They are "an attempt to try to make communicable—by which I mean shareable—something that is true of us all." This quotation is the novelist Richard Ford's apt characterization of the generic-art function of literary forms, and it applies equally and deftly to the art of *Afrique noire*. That magically and serenely aesthetic art at the Guggenheim Museum's exhibition is also African, too, in the cultural-consciousness meaning of the term "Africa" or "African."

Thus, I have no doubt that the brilliant Senufo craft-artist (not just "craftworker" who makes "objects," as Professor Appiah would have it) who fashioned that deep, haunting and sometimes jocular pathos that pervades-and-shivers-across several forms of Senufo masks was more than a craftsman. He was, as I just mentioned, a craft-artist. Which is to say, it was more than a mere lineage, clan or tribal-servicing thing. His craft-purpose was, rather, a human-engaging thing, a human-explanatory thing and a human-uplifting thing. Something with meaning for us all. Thus, the truths that emanate from the finest creations of Nok craft-artists, Luba craft-artists, Afikpo craft-artists, Igbo craft-artists, Ashanti craft-artists, etc. are without a doubt Africa-connected truths.

What do I mean by "Africa-connected truths"? I mean that, just as the truths of craft-artists elsewhere in the world can be said to have been trans-region connected or linked (be they India-linked, China-linked, etc.), so too the Luba craft-artist, the Mende, Igbo and Dogon craft-artists, among others, can be said to have shared trans-region connected human realities. There were no hermetically atomized African village societies and cultures, as Professor Appiah's erroneous formulation would have us believe. Perhaps the crucial generator of trans-regional human realities that the classic African craft-artists shared across thousands of ethnic and linguistic clusters, from perhaps the twelfth century into the nineteenth century, was the

It may be small. But the Bose® Acoustic Wave® music system is definitely an overachiever. The unit features a compact disc player, an AM/FM radio, a handy remote control, and our patented acoustic waveguide speaker technology. And it produces a rich, natural sound quality comparable to audio systems costing thousands of dollars. We know that's hard to believe. So we're ready to prove it. Call or write now for our complimentary guide to this award-winning system. Because, like the system itself, it's only available directly from Bose.

Call today. 1-800-898-BOSE, ext. A98.

Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____ ( ) _____ ( ) _____
Name (Please Print) Daytime Telephone Evening Telephone

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Or mail to: Bose Corporation, Dept. CDD-A98, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vicious traffic in human slavery, perpetrated first by Islamic societies and eventually by Christian capitalist societies. This is what that great body of post-World War II historical scholarship on Africa has taught us—scholarship pioneered by the late Nigerian historian Kenneth O. Dike, Ivor Wilks, Frederick Cooper, Jan Vansina and Joseph C. Miller, among others. It is simply inconceivable that the classic craft-artists on the African continent functioned without awareness of Africa-connected truths.

MARTIN KILSON
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The liberal Weber

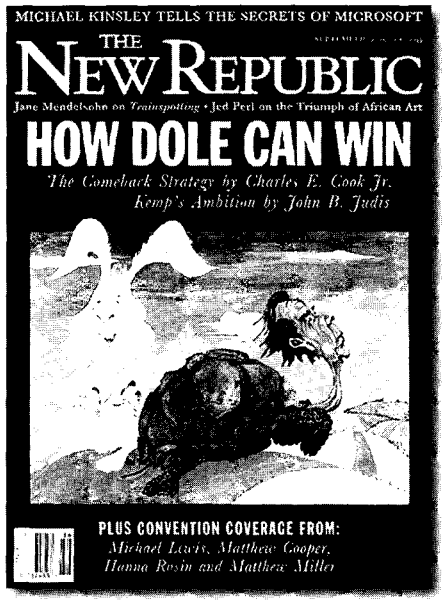
To the editors:

Richard Wolin's review of my *Max Weber: Politics and the Spirit of Tragedy* reads as though it had been written as an exercise in correct politics rather than an effort to face the complexities of intellectual history. As with other veterans of the '60s generation, Wolin remains convinced that Weber has nothing to teach democratic America and has no rightful place in the Western liberal tradition. Wrong on both counts.

My book invokes "the Hamiltonian Weber" who looked to the responsibilities of authority and leadership to advance the cause of freedom and justice. Wolin advises the opposite: "American liberalism needs to open itself up to the ideals of the Jeffersonian 'party of hope' " and "to turn from Weber to Dewey, who knew that the best cure for an ailing democracy was more democracy." Historically it was Hamilton who championed the cause of black freedom and helped establish a court system that has done so much in our time to forge civil rights and equal protection of the laws, while Jefferson's "party of hope" led to a racist defense of slavery and to a disgraceful collaboration with Napoleon to crush the Haitian uprising of 1800. Since when did "more democracy" befriend abolitionists, feminists, Native Americans and African Americans, immigrants and refugees, trade unionists, homosexuals, environmentalists, poor children and others who could seldom turn to the majority will?

What is it that "Diggins does not adequately comprehend"? "By attempting to assimilate Weber's political standpoint to Anglo-American conditions, Diggins tears him from the context, the German context, in which he must be understood, and ends up painting a portrait of Weber that is more lovely and less faithful." Weberian scholars now know that Weber himself was indeed an admirer of Anglo-American traditions who went so far as to advocate, as indicated in the book, that Germany adopt much of British parliamentary institutions even while Germany was at war with England.

Wolin spends much space discussing Weber's imperialist pronouncements in the first part of the twentieth century but says nothing about his anti-imperialism and anti-annexationism during the World War I years. He seeks to categorize Weber as the same reactionary that his own '60s generation mistakenly believed him to be. "For Weber, democracy possessed no intrinsic normative content. Popular sovereignty and theories of natural right were discredited platitudes of the Enlightenment." Wolin then cites Weber advising Robert Michels that "such concepts as 'will of


MICHAEL KINSLEY TELLS THE SECRETS OF MICROSOFT
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Jane Mendelsohn on Trainspotting • Jed Perl on the Triumph of African Art
HOW DOLE CAN WIN
The Comeback Strategy by Charles E. Cook Jr.
Kemp's Ambition by John B. Judis
PLUS CONVENTION COVERAGE FROM:
Michael Lewis, Matthew Cooper,
Hanna Rosin and Matthew Miller

the people' have long since ceased to exist for me; they are fictitious. All ideas aiming at abolishing the domination of men over men are 'utopian.' "

Perhaps if Wolin had delved deeper, he would have acknowledged that throughout my book Weber is quoted as upholding the Western liberal tradition. "How can one possibly save *any remnants* of the 'individualist' freedom in any sense?" Weber wrote in *Economy and Society*. "It is a gross self-deception to believe that without the achievements of the age of the Rights of Man any one of us, including the most conservative, can go on living his life."

Wolin's Weber is a '60s portrait—it shows its age.

JOHN PATRICK DIGGINS
Laguna Beach, California

Richard Wolin replies:

I'm not sure why John Patrick Diggins feels compelled to reduce legitimate criticisms of Weber's political leanings to the terms of tired generational disputes. Weber's wartime embrace of the parliamentary system was an eminently tactical move: he merely considered it a more efficient mechanism of selecting elites than the quasi-feudal German system, where the anachronistic Junker class carried disproportionate weight. Moreover, what sense can it possibly make to classify someone who at the end of his life wholeheartedly embraced the idea of a charismatically based "leader-democracy" as a liberal?

Finally, Diggins's paternalistic conception of the way that various minority groups have achieved civic equality over the years is a throwback to the age of Enlightened Despotism. What about the Democratic social struggles on the part of the working class, African Americans, women, gays, etc.? Historically speaking, only once these groups assumed responsibility for their own political destiny did their lot improve. Social conditions progress not because those in positions of authority are necessarily "enlightened" but because mobilized social groups compel them to live up to their own principles.

Pride and prejudice

To the editors:

I deplore all hate mail, and if the sample you printed of CAIR's correspondence with TNR (August 19 & 26) is representative, Muslims need a better group to protect them against prejudice. But they certainly need some protection, if only against TNR. In "Israel Bonds" (August 5), Martin Peretz actually wrote, "where are the signs that any Arab country has the cultural disposition needed for scientific and industrial takeoff? Alas, these are societies which cannot make a brick, let alone a microchip." To ask a TNR-style question, can you imagine what would happen if Peretz had made a similar statement about African, Latin American or Asian countries? This isn't hate mail; it's licensed hate journalism.

ANN DOUGLAS
New York, New York

Martin Peretz replies:

What would happen is less important than whether such a statement would be true, a principle that should hold regardless of the societies being discussed. No African countries besides South Africa (and perhaps Mauritius), which have already experienced scientific and technical takeoff, show signs of doing so. There are certainly some Latin American states (Chile, Argentina) that already export industrial goods; most others do not. In many countries in Asia, of course, science and technology is not at all backward.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Message from Negative Population Growth, Inc.

Why Does Our Government Allow Over One Million New Immigrants to Come Here Every Year?

. . . When a Majority of Americans Say We Should Not Admit More Than 100,000 a Year at Most!!

A Roper poll, sponsored by NPG, Inc. and released in February, showed that a majority of Americans (54%) want immigration cut to not more than 100,000 a year. So why does our Federal Government allow more than **ten times that many** to come here every year?

The poll showed that 70% of Americans – **that's over two out of three** – want immigration cut drastically to not over 300,000 a year. How in the world can our government possibly justify an immigration policy that allows **four times that many** to come here every year? Don't our elected representatives have an obligation to heed the clearly expressed wishes of the American public?

The poll also showed that a substantial number of Americans (20%) simply want immigration halted completely. In other words, **one American in five wants no immigration at all.**

We urge Congress, with the vigorous support of President Clinton, to enact legislation that would drastically reduce the present level of immigration, and thus bring our immigration policy into line with the clearly expressed wishes of the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Illegal Immigration - Out of Control

Polls have shown for years that, almost unanimously, Americans want illegal immigration stopped. Despite that, our Federal Government has done very little to reduce illegal immigration, much less stop it. An estimated 350,000 illegal aliens settle here permanently each year. **That is over three times more than the 100,000 a year a majority of Americans favor for total immigration.** These illegal settlers join a pool of an estimated **five to six million** illegal aliens who are already living here permanently in violation of our laws.

The Roper poll cited above showed that 74% of Americans (three out of every four) want illegal aliens identified and deported. So why is our government not doing just that? In 1994 only about 40,000 illegal aliens were deported. A vastly increased program of deportations would not only deter prospective illegal migrants abroad, but also motivate those already here to leave voluntarily.

The Central Issue – Overpopulation

NPG urges a drastic reduction in immigration solely because of its contribution to the disastrous growth of our U.S. population. We are on the path from our present population of 265 million to a population of nearly 500 million by 2100. **More than 90% of that growth will be the direct result of post-2000 immigration.**

Immigration is the driving force behind the population growth that is devastating our environment and the quality of our lives. **Primarily because of immigration we are rushing at breakneck speed toward an environmental and economic disaster.**

U.S. Population Size – A Vitally Important National Issue

Other things being equal, **our population size determines our impact on our already over-stressed environment and increasingly scarce resources. The size of our population is, therefore, a vitally important national issue.**

If we are to have any hope at all of creating an economy that will be sustainable indefinitely, in a sound and healthy environment, with an adequate standard of living for all, we need a smaller, not a larger, U.S. population. **But we will never be able to achieve a smaller population unless we reduce immigration to a small fraction of its present level. That is a simple fact.**

Isn't there someone among our political leaders who is willing to recognize the need for a smaller U.S.population and for public policies to achieve it? He or she would have the support of a majority of Americans. The Roper poll cited above showed that 54% of Americans believe that our country is already overpopulated.

NPG is a nonprofit, national membership organization established in 1972. Contributions to NPG are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

Yes, I want to become a member of NPG, and help you work towards a smaller U.S. population. I am enclosing my check for annual membership dues.

____ $30 ____ $50 ____ $100 ____ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to:

Negative Population Growth, Inc.
210 The Plaza, P.O. Box 1206, Teaneck, NJ 07666

NR-96

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 7, 1996

FREE AND UNFAIR

"Existing Leaders of Ethnic Groups Win Bosnian Vote," announced the headline in *The New York Times*. Surprise!

For the American government, the up sides are everywhere. John Kornblum, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, crowed about the fact that "hundreds of people now have some kind of democratic mandate.... I am absolutely convinced that a lot of this anger and hatred will be rounded off and fade away as there are more civilian and economic links." Never mind that anger and hatred are not usually the objects of rounding off and fading away in the Balkans. Anthony Lake was celebrating the elections even before they were held. They are a happy measure of progress, he insisted in *The New York Times*. "One year ago war was raging in Bosnia, the worst bloodshed in Europe since World War II. Today, there is peace. Marketplaces are full of life, not death. Playgrounds belong to children, not to snipers." This is true; and it is also true that the intervention of the Clinton administration made the difference. Still, modesty is all that becomes the National Security Adviser. Like his president, he came too late to those marketplaces and those playgrounds. He is presiding over a change in their fortunes only because he, like his president, will preside over anything.

Were the elections free and fair? By the standards of the democratization professionals, they seem to have been more or less free and fair, though the media in Bosnia appears to have been impeded from above, and there were reports of some irregularities. In these elections, the representatives of the Muslim, Serb and Croat communities of Bosnia appear to have won, each of them, about 80 percent of the votes of their communities. And so the three-headed, two-year presidency will be led by Alija Izetbegovic, a Bosnian Muslim, and he will share it with Momcilo Krajisnik, a Bosnian Serb who reports to Radovan Karadzic in Pale, and Kresimir Zubak, a Bosnian Croat. The war criminal of Pale, remember, was banned from this election in another one of Richard Holbrooke's noisy, hollow miracles. But Karadzicism was not banned. It carried the day.

Bosnia will now be ruled by a presidency that is shared by three people and three parties who are, politically and philosophically, enemies of sharing. This government is a union of separatists. The separatist aspirations of the Serbs of Bosnia were openly proclaimed in Krajisnik's campaign; the separatist realities of the Croats of Bosnia—they carry Croatian passports, use Croatian money and vote in Croatian elections—were ratified by the Dayton agreement last year; and the separatist inclinations of Izetbegovic are difficult to deny, though he denies them. He calls for a multiethnic country with monoethnic rule.

There is a lesson in the incoherence of Izetbegovic's ideal. What has occurred in postwar Bosnia, and what the Bosnian election has grimly exposed, is a collision between the requirements of democracy and the requirements of pluralism. A society in which everybody, or almost everybody, is the same with respect to ethnicity or religion can be a democratic society, if there are civil liberties for all those same individuals and all those same individuals have the right to vote. Anyway, there is no such thing as perfect homogeneity; people who do not differ about identity may differ about taxation and health care and foreign affairs and all the other particulars of policy. And yet a democratic society that is ethnically or religiously homogeneous is a weak democracy; and this is certainly the case if its homogeneity is a matter of pride. Something there is in democracy that doesn't love a wall. Heterogeneity is more in the democratic spirit. Of course, there is also no such thing as perfect heterogeneity; people who differ about identity may not differ about taxation and the rest. But some differences matter more than others, and democracy must not flinch from the differences that matter. As it has flinched in Bosnia.

"Some kind of democratic mandate," indeed. An election in which like votes always and only for like is not an occasion for celebration. The Bosnian elections were free, but they were not precisely fair. They will not establish a more democratic heterogeneity. They will establish only a less bloody homogeneity. This is not a small thing in those parts. But Bosnia will almost certainly collapse into its tribes; and the possibility that the collapse will take the form of another war, another genocidal war, justifies the presence of our troops. This is no time for champagne, except for the cleansers. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

TAKING CREDIT: By now the press has thoroughly, and appropriately, debunked Bob Dole's claim that his tax cut is compatible with a balanced budget. But equally annoying, and less scrutinized, is his claim that the tax cut won't just benefit the rich. Take his $500 per child tax credit, which he claims is "for low- and middle-income families." The original child credit in the Contract with America was deductible against federal payroll taxes as well as against income taxes. This is fair. Payroll taxes hit the poor much harder. Of course, when congressional Republicans were looking to free up money last year, they tossed this feature overboard first, thus denying the credit to low-income families that pay high payroll taxes but low income taxes. Dole goes further. Not only would he confine the child credit to families that owe income tax, he would count their income tax burden *after* subtracting the Earned Income Tax Credit. Every other refundable tax credit is counted after the EITC—Dole's plan has to make a special exemption to cut off the working poor. All told, Dole would deem 40 percent of all kids too poor to qualify for the child credit. Only 5 percent would be too wealthy—he knows where his votes are.

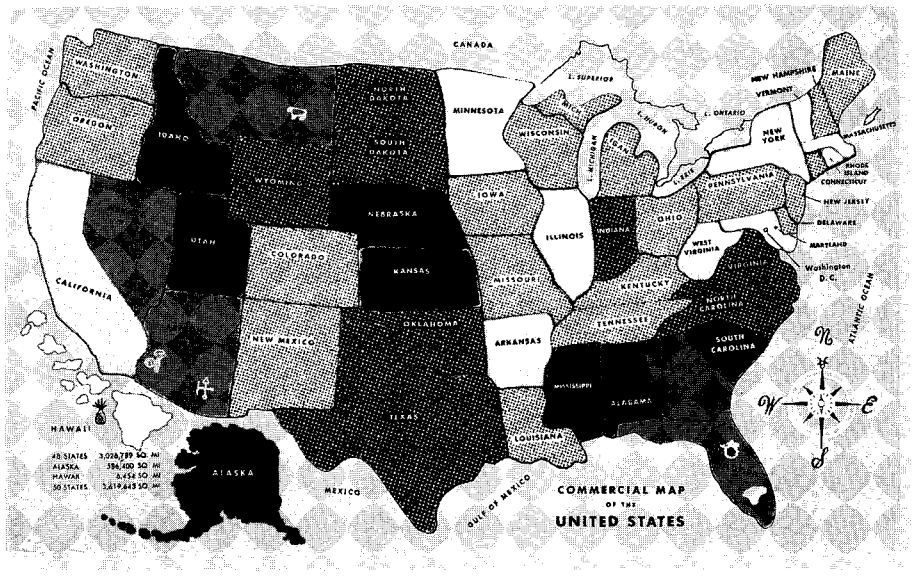
BANE & CO: In resigning from the Department of Health and Human Services last week to protest the new welfare policy, Peter Edelman joined a select club—longtime Clinton pals whose friendships have dissolved during the president's first term. But, while the FOB betrayal angle titillated, the concurrent resignation of Edelman's HHS colleague Mary Jo Bane was more telling. Bane, widely respected across partisan lines for her expertise, was not only to have been a key implementer of the recently signed welfare bill; she would have been a major player in efforts to reform it next year. Her resignation suggests she believes that Bill Clinton's repeated pledges to "fix what's wrong" with the bill he signed are just what they appear to be—empty campaign rhetoric—and her resignation, following that of liberal HHS wonks David Ellwood and Wendell Primus, will help make such a prediction self-fulfilling. "It's going to be impossible to fix the bill," says one administration official who works on welfare reform. "Even if [Democrats] take back the House and Senate, there's very little chance they're going to make substantive changes." Adds a House Republican staffer: "The chance of getting statutory change is nothing. The American public is at least 80 percent behind us on this issue." And, if the first term has taught us anything, it is that those are the kind of numbers Clinton understands.

Weekly Electoral Vote Estimate

As of 9/13/96
by Hal Bruno, ABC News Political Director

(538 Total Votes, 270 Required for Election)

Clinton=350 Even=53 Dole=135



Clinton Strong
Clinton Ahead
Close/Even
Dole Strong
Dole Ahead

Weekly estimates are not scientific, but the result of a compilation of interviews and local polling.

Map modified for TNR by Jane Holloway

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM: An assessment of Bob Dole's recent about-face on the Chemical Weapons Convention, which has doomed Senate ratification of the treaty this year, might begin with the people who are now his allies and those he's betrayed. At Dole's side is Jesse Helms, who opposes international treaties because, well, they're international. Also leading the fight against ratification is Arizona freshman Senator Jon Kyl, who peddled the most outlandish "Star Wars" fantasies long after scientific evidence had forced his Republican colleagues into embarrassed silence. In favor of the treaty are those naïve leftists in ... the chemical industry, who realize that if other countries verify their chemical exports against potential dual use while America refuses, it will damage them competitively. If only Bob Dole and Jack Kemp weren't so hostile to the needs of private enterprise. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bob Dole and the Christian Coalition.

MIRACLE WORKER

By Roger Simon

Pat Robertson ran for president in 1988 because God told him to, just as God had told him which street to live on, which call letters to use for his radio station, which transmitter to buy for his TV studio, which people to hire for his business and which securities to sell. God sometimes speaks to Robertson in "the silence of his inner thoughts," and sometimes Robertson hears an actual voice from God "level and conversational," which Robertson realizes some people might find "spooky." There is one difficulty in hearing directly from God, however. "There is a percentage of error," Robertson admits: some of the advice that appears to be from God is actually coming from Satan in disguise.

And right about now, Robertson must be wondering just which one it was who encouraged him to back Bob Dole for president. "This campaign for the presidency is far behind," Robertson said at the recent Christian Coalition convention in Washington. "Twenty-three points is about as insurmountable an obstacle as I can think of. In my personal opinion, there's got to be a miracle from almighty God to pull it out, and that could happen." You bet. On his TV show, Robertson has prayed for miracles ranging from cures for scoliosis to the recovery of a viewer's lost diamond ring. He has also claimed that his prayers diverted Hurricane Gloria from his television station in Virginia. (And, indeed, the hurricane swerved and slammed into Long Island and Connecticut instead, where sixteen people were killed and $47 million in damage was done. Whether Pat Robertson bears responsibility for that is a question for a higher power.)

Saving Bob Dole might be even more difficult than diverting a force of nature. "What's easier, moving a hurricane or moving the Dole campaign?" Robertson asked. "I think a hurricane is easier, to tell you the truth." But Robertson is willing to give it his best shot. Bob Dole is his ticket to the White House and to real influence in American politics.

What's in it for Bob Dole is less clear. Faced with the agonizing choice of reaching out to critical voters in the uncommitted middle or reaching out to committed Republicans in order to energize his base of support, Bob Dole has found a third way: he has decided to scare the hell out of people.

Originally, the Dole campaign made the sensible decision to keep him far away from the Christian Coalition convention. Jack Kemp (who ended up giving a very measured, very clever speech to the group) would go instead. True, the Christian Coalition had given Dole crucial support in defeating Pat Buchanan in the South Carolina primary in March. And true, without that support Dole might well have been a footnote to history today (instead of becoming a footnote to history tomorrow). But the GOP primaries, dominated by conservatives, are one thing and the general election dominated by the mass of American voters is another. The last thing Dole needs right now is to appeal to the extremes.

So what did Dole do? The morning of the Christian Coalition event, he changed his mind, showed up at the Washington Hilton and was introduced by Pat Robertson, who called him "a dear friend" and raised his arm in victory. What was he thinking? After all, while the Republican revolution of 1994 boosted the Christian Coalition's reputation for turning out votes, it also had an opposite and even greater effect: it frightened people. When Americans got a good dose of the Republican freshman class—its ideological purity, its unwillingness to compromise and its willingness to shut down the government—some of the public recoiled and has been backing away ever since.

Seen as too liberal, Bill Clinton slid to the center effortlessly (he was, in fact, elected as a centrist). From V-chips to school uniforms to welfare reform, Clinton has showed a real knack for crowd pleasing, if not party pleasing.

Bob Dole, on the other hand, has had trouble putting together a crowd to please. With only weeks left in the election campaign, he has yet to deliver a coherent reason for people to vote for him, except for his promise of cutting income taxes by 15 percent, a promise, polling shows, that people simply do not buy.

Yet miracles do happen in both weather and politics, and it is simply too early to count Dole out—unless he keeps doing dumb things like appearing on stage with Pat Robertson. Most members of the Christian Coalition are already planning to vote for Bob Dole. What choice do they have? But among other religious voters—those who attend church three or more times a month, for example—Clinton leads Dole by two percentage points. These are exactly the kind of moderate voters Dole needs to reach and exactly the kind who find Pat Robertson scary.

Just when the Clinton campaign was losing a little traction with its alarmist commercial about a "Dole-Gingrich" administration, what comes along to help it out? Dole-Robertson. "A picture's worth a thousand words," said Joe Lockhart, spokesman for the Clinton-Gore campaign. "Watching Bob Dole arm in arm with Pat Robertson speaks volumes to the extreme agenda being pursued by the Dole-Kemp-Gingrich campaign."

Bob Dole taking the stage with Pat Robertson was the equivalent of Michael Dukakis taking that tank ride: something so jarring, so awful, so politically dumb you wonder why the Dole campaign didn't think of it sooner.

ROGER SIMON is a nationally syndicated columnist whose book on the 1996 presidential campaign will be published by HarperCollins next year.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EAST HARLEM POSTCARD

CLASS CONFLICT

By Stephanie Gutmann

The sun is still struggling to cut through early morning haze, but in front of a nondescript commercial building in Spanish Harlem, New York's raffish press corps is already hunkered down in one of its ad hoc tent cities, staking out turf with snakes of black video cable, thickets of light poles and TV anchors rehearsing "standups" wherever they can find a piece of open pavement.

This morning the battery of electronic recording equipment is trained—not on the "walking" of a "perp"—but on a procession of 12- and 13-year-old girls in navy blue kneesocks and knife-pleated kilts. The girls are hurrying into the building for the first day of the inaugural semester of the Young Women's Leadership School of East Harlem, a small, private academy-style junior high—and New York City's first single-sex public school in a decade.

Something about a cluster of reporters around a school door, lenses trained on brown, still-gawky limbs, evokes grainy newsreels from the days of school desegregation. But, while the scene looks vaguely familiar, the central players have shifted position. For the beaming parents in attendance—mostly black and Hispanic—the new school is a chance to get their girls a decent education. For the New York Civil Liberties Union, the National Organization for Women and others, however, it is a new manifestation of discrimination and segregation—and they are shuffling through a variety of legal remedies to, in effect, shut it down.

Talk of a possible injunction against the school last July didn't stop Winsome McDermott, a 35-year-old single Bronx mother of two, from pushing to get her 11-year-old daughter Dania on YWLS's wait list. (Some of the places are offered to children outside of YWLS's East Harlem school district.) Even once a place opened up, admission was by no means automatic. Transcripts had to be collected, recommendations solicited. Dania was taken for pre-admission interviews and testing—and McDermott had to ask for time off from her work at a local "job-readiness" program. Then, once Dania was accepted, her mother spent $300 for her school uniform. Still, McDermott has no regrets.

"My choices were to send her to the neighborhood school, which academically wouldn't do her any good, or send her to this school where I know she'll get a better education. Its premise is that it is a college prep school, and I think it will challenge the young girls and push them in a college direction."

The school's incendiary commitment to single-sex education was, if anything, even more appealing. McDermott attended an all-girls high school back in the '70s before the city phased them out, and getting Dania into this one was "a relief."

"There have been studies done proving girls fare better in single-sex school, and particularly at their age group, with puberty, you're really conscious about your body and it's good to be in an environment where you don't feel extra self-conscious because you have boys around."

But it is precisely the school's "no boys" policy that disturbs organizations like the NYCLU, the New York chapter of NOW and the New York Civil Rights Coalition, which have gotten together to file a sex-discrimination complaint with the Department of Education. While they wait the four to six months it could take the feds to act, they are hoping to attract a male defendant so they can take the case to court. The school must agree to admit boys, the coalition argues, and engage in "outreach to the community" to let people know it has changed its policy. NYCLU Director Norman Siegel also suggests a new "gender neutral" name—something like the Susan B. Anthony Leadership School.

According to Janet Gallagher, director of the Women's Rights Project for the American Civil Liberties Union, which is acting as a consultant to the NYCLU on this case, the Harlem girls school is objectionable because it fosters "generalizations and stereotypes based on gender." The idea that girls and boys inevitably distract each other is, Gallagher says, an "enormously dangerous" presumption, one that reminds her of her days in Catholic school, where girls were encouraged to think of themselves as "walking occasions of sin."

Meanwhile, the school—incorrect thinking about immutable sex differences and all—seems to have touched a responsive chord among parents of school-age children all over the city. It has a waiting list of about 100 girls, and school organizers say they've been getting calls and letters from parents of fourth-graders and fifth-graders trying to secure places many years in advance.

The Young Women's Leadership School case is not the first time that New York civil rights activists have found themselves in an ironic relationship to the working-class blacks and Hispanic families for whom they've long been advocates. In 1993, the organization threatened to file a complaint of church-public school entanglement over the "Adopt-a-School program," in which a group of Harlem ministers served as mentors in neighborhood schools, placing themselves on call for anything from counseling to signing report cards. And in 1991, it held press conferences and churned out let-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

The Wrong Target

Many people believe that getting tenure guarantees a teacher a lifetime job, even if the teacher's subsequent performance is lousy. So they listen sympathetically to calls for abolishing tenure. But tenure does nothing of the sort. It simply guarantees that there will be some form of due process before a teacher can be dismissed. The real problem lies in the evaluation process that leads to tenure and monitors the performance of tenured teachers.

Tenure decisions are typically based on evaluations made by an administrator. He probably pays a flying visit to a new teacher's classroom a couple of times a year, which gives him very little basis for deciding whether or not a teacher is doing a good job. As a result, novice teachers who need help don't get it; instead, they are likely to receive a *satisfactory* or even an *excellent* on their evaluations. After three or four years, when the probationary period is over, they probably get tenure.

Administrators gave 98 percent of the teachers they evaluated a perfect score.

Because evaluations of tenured teachers are even skimpier, administrators are also unlikely to notice that someone's teaching is not up to par. So they often don't have any firm basis for recommending that a tenured teacher be let go.

"Don't Let Teacher Evaluation Become a Ritual," an article directed to school administrators (*Executive Educator,* May 1988), minces no words in describing how worthless evaluations often are. The authors cite their survey of 35 school districts in eastern Pennsylvania, which showed that 98 percent of the teachers were given a perfect score of 80 by the administrators who evaluated them; 1.1 percent got scores between 75 and 79; and fewer than 1 percent scored below 74. Was there something in the Pennsylvania water that made for perfect teaching? The authors thought it more likely that the evaluations were sloppy—and they didn't think this was a local problem: "We suspect that inflated scores on teacher evaluations are common. And these scores are a sign that teacher supervision and evaluation are in trouble in many school systems."

Everybody loses with a system like this—other teachers, who have to live with the results of bad teaching by a colleague, as well as students. But there is an alternative that works. Peer review or peer intervention—it goes by various names—is a system developed by teacher unions, in collaboration with their school districts, in which experienced and excellent teachers observe probationary teachers and offer them help when they need it. At the conclusion of the probationary period, these master teachers make recommendations about who should be offered tenure and who let go. Peer review also includes assistance to tenured teachers who need help with their teaching and, in some cases, advice to quit the profession.

Toledo Federation of Teachers' peer review program, perhaps the first in the country, has been in operation since 1981. In Toledo, consulting teachers spend up to three years helping to train and evaluate new teachers, and they play a major role in deciding which new teachers will get tenure. Tenured teachers who are in trouble get the same kind of help from colleagues, and it continues until the troubled teacher has either improved to the point of being successful or a termination is recommended.

But aren't teachers likely to be even easier on their colleagues than administrators? Both the Toledo Federation of Teachers and the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, which has had a peer assistance and evaluation program since 1985, have found the opposite to be true. In the Cincinnati program's first year, consulting teachers rated 10.5 percent of their new teachers less than satisfactory, compared to 4 percent by administrators. And 5 percent of beginning teachers under peer review were recommended for dismissal as compared to 1.6 percent of those evaluated by principals. Results for subsequent years have been similar.

Cincinnati has an arrangement similar to Toledo's for veteran teachers whose teaching is not up to par. After two years of support and assistance, the consulting teacher makes a final report, recommending dismissal if necessary. This system salvages teachers who can be helped, but there is another important plus. It greatly reduces the number of dismissals that lead to lengthy and expensive disputes. According to Tom Mooney, president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, this is because the teachers who are advised to leave can't blame their termination on sloppy or unfair procedures by management. They have been offered help by their colleagues and given a chance to improve. At best, the decision to terminate represents a consensus among the various parties. At the very least, the teacher sees that he won't have much of a court case.

Teachers (and teacher unions) don't hire, evaluate or tenure teachers: administrators do. But the whole process would be a lot better if teachers *were* able, as a profession, to take responsibility for themselves. The programs in Toledo and Cincinnati, and similar ones sponsored by the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and the Rochester Teachers Association, show that this idea can work. Instead of getting rid of tenure, we should be moving to give teachers more say about who becomes—and remains—a tenured colleague.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

ADVERTISEMENT
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ters to protest the proposed Ujamaa Institute, a male-only school based on the idea that young black boys are an especially vulnerable group and could profit by a respite from the matriarchal worlds of single-mother homes and female-dominated schools and churches.

But sex segregation, like school vouchers, is a culturally conservative remedy increasingly popular with embattled minorities, however objectionable it may be to many white liberals. Sex separatism—as seen in the Million Man March and in the many men-only groups in New York City churches—"is part of our tradition," argues Madeleine Moore, president of the New York City Coalition of 100 Black Women, one of the community groups on YWLS's advisory board. "It is a good thing that we are getting back to things that worked." Moore calls Norman Siegel's vision of combating sexual tension in co-ed classrooms with bureaucratic intervention (he suggests "a comprehensive plan" by the Board of Education to "ameliorate the dynamic," including "training and monitoring the teachers to assure that the boys and girls are treated equally") "naïveté, a luxury of the ruling class."

As for Winsome McDermott, she'd like to talk to the folks at NOW and company parent to parent. "I'm wondering: Do they send their kids to private school? I'm sure their children go to good schools, and I'm sure they made every effort they could possibly do to provide that. The public school system is very bad. YWLS is a small step in the right direction. This is absolutists leading people like me who don't have money for private schools."

STEPHANIE GUTMANN has written about the New York City schools for the *City Journal* and *The New York Post.*

QANDAHAR POSTCARD

STONERS

By Andrew Meier

One sweltering morning in July, the Taliban upped the ante. Few in Afghanistan doubted the zeal of these fundamentalist rebels in bringing *Sharia*, old-time Islamic law in its most unforgiving form, to the lands they control. But this time the Taliban, whose name translates as "religious students," outdid themselves. Shortly after dawn prayers, the mullahs in the southern city of Qandahar summoned the populace. Nearly 6,000 witnesses gathered outside the central mosque. A few days earlier, a woman and her stepson, both in their 20s, had been arrested for adultery. Down the road at the Taliban's district court the mullahs had found them guilty and, for the first time in modern Afghan history, issued a sentence of death by stoning.

The Taliban's first execution of a woman went exceedingly well. No one interfered, and hundreds joined in. The convicted lovers died slowly, witnesses say, in unbearable and unsightly pain. The mullahs have become proficient at this sort of thing. Executions, if not stonings, are routine, and amputations, usually for petty thievery, are even more common.

Not since 1979, when the Ayatollah reared his revolution in Iran, has such a potent reactionary force taken hold in this volatile region. Not since the Soviets invaded Afghanistan that same year has the West faced a more ominous specter there, for the Taliban threaten to fill in a 2,000-mile front of enmity stretching from Iraq to Iran to Afghanistan. Thanks to the Taliban, the site of the cold war's last great stand-off—where "freedom fighters" backed by the U.S. wrangled with a Soviet army desperate to hold on to the last remnants of its empire—is in danger of devolving into what one local aid worker calls "the most fundamentalist place on earth."

The insurgency first emerged in late 1994, promising to save Afghanistan from the factionalist chaos of its post-Soviet period. From Qandahar the Taliban swept across southern Afghanistan, taking the northwestern city of Herat without a shot and caravaning to the southern edge of Kabul. There they have camped out, launching rockets on the city daily since last November. This month, they seized the eastern city of Jalabad, one of the last Afghan cities to maintain an independent government and the all-important gateway to Pakistan.

Their goal, as one mullah—the police chief of Qandahar—told me, is simply "to bring a good Islamic state" to Afghanistan. Never mind that Burnahuddin Rabbani and his government, the victors in the twelve-year war against the Soviets, think they have installed an Islamic state already. The emphasis is on "good." For Talibs, Islamic law comes in only one form: the strictest. And so in Qandahar the rules are simple: No music. No television. No women in the workplace. No women in the home—unless it's their own. No women on the street—unless enshrouded in the *burkha.*

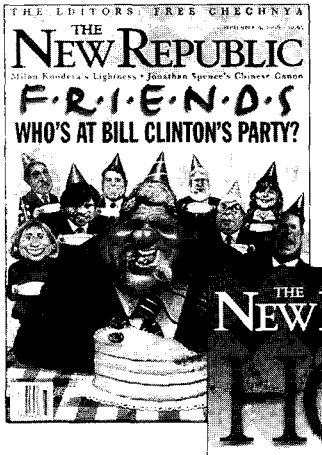
The ban on TV and music is made obvious by the twin "TV Towers," as the locals call them. At a main intersection downtown, a dozen shattered TVs wrapped in tape gutted from video and music cassettes hang from poles about twenty feet high on either side of the dirt road. In May, UNICEF tried to start a nursing training center in Qandahar. The mullahs soon closed it down. "Our women shouldn't work," explains Mullah Baluch, the "health minister" whose sole claim to medical expertise is his uncanny ability to lop off hands and

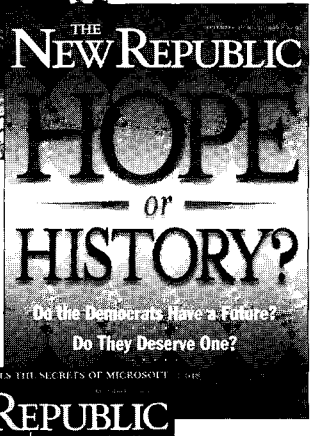
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

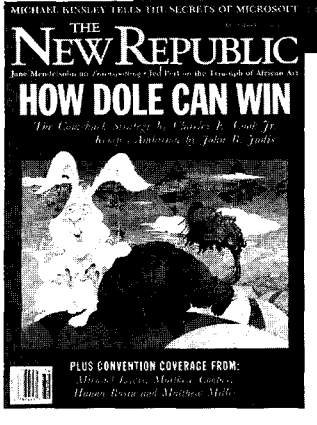
MOST THOUGHTFUL GIFT YOU CAN GIVE THIS holiday SEASON.

THE New Republic

AND RECEIVE SPECIAL HOLIDAY SAVINGS.







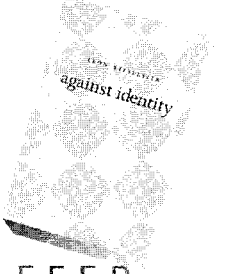
You know the rewards of reading the most thought-provoking magazine in America each week. Now you can reward your friends and family with the most thoughtful magazine in America and save up to $100 off the newsstand price at the same time!

A welcome challenge for curious minds, your gift of The New Republic will compliment your friends... and remind them of your thoughtfulness throughout the year.

give and receive!

A WONDERFUL BONUS GIFT

When you give two or more gifts, we'll also send you, hot off the press, a copy of Leon Wieseltier's new book, *Against Identity*—an expanded version of his widely acclaimed New Republic essay on the politics and culture of identity in America.



SPECIAL HOLIDAY GIFT OFFER

Your first gift or the renewal of your own subscription is **$79.97.**
All additional gifts are only **$39.99.**
Just send back the attached card, or call today.

act now! 1-800-827-1289

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feet. "And Western men shouldn't look at them."

In Qandahar's mosques the mullahs gather long before dawn each day, led by Mohammed Omar, the one-eyed head mullah. Earlier this year, Omar called together the Taliban's ruling council to witness a great drama. Omar, who is all of 35, unlocked the holiest shrine inside the central mosque, cloaked himself in the purported shroud of Mohammed, fell to his knees before his awed fellow mullahs and at last emerged in the light to crown himself the "Amir Muminin," the "King of All Muslims."

The news was too much for the folks in Kabul. "How can anyone dare call himself the Amir?" asks Ahmed Shah Massoud, who controls Kabul and the northeastern provinces held by the Rabbani government. As he takes tea in Istalef, a remote mountain village forty minutes from Kabul, Massoud, who is in his 40s, remains confident and composed despite the Taliban's ceaseless rocketing of Kabul. "How can anyone believe what he says? To claim to be the Amir is to claim to govern all the Islamic people of the world, the Algerians, the Iranians, the Saudis—these people do not look lightly at such a claim."

Who are these religious rebels, bold enough to launch Holy War against holy warriors who, after all, boast a decade of experience and a victory, against enormous odds, over the Red Army? Some actually are young students; others are in their 40s. Some of the Taliban are ex-communists who supported the pro-Soviet regime, and a few hundred are Pakistani infantrymen exported to protect Benazir Bhutto's investment. (Reports persist that Pakistan's military intelligence service was the Taliban's earliest patron.) The youngest of them were born in exile, during the first stages of the Afghan-Soviet war. Bred on the Koran and rice in the sprawling refugee camps of Baluchistan, they know the tribal territories of southwestern Pakistan better than they know their own country. "We were born together," Mullah Syedullah tells me. "We were raised together, and now we will live, fight and die together." Now, at the main madrasa in the city of Quetta, a four-hour drive from Qandahar, a new generation of Taliban are already in training—davening in endless rows over the well-worn teachings of the Prophet.

If all goes well, according to Allah's plan, the Taliban will soon reach their Mecca, seize Kabul, subjugate the multiplying fractions and rule over a "good Islamic state" deeply hostile to the West. Ironically, when the Taliban first came to prominence, many Western diplomats and journalists greeted them as Afghanistan's saviors. Here at last was a pliant political movement that could cleanse Afghanistan of the degenerate mujahedin and even promise to wipe out the narcotics trade. But, as a grizzled opium farmer in the Helmand Valley assures me, "These are no doves of peace. The Taliban are worse than the warlords. They'll only make more drugs, more terror and, of course, more war."

And the Taliban, the U.N. has learned by suffering a series of deadlocks and dead-end deals with them, is anything but cooperative with the international community. The most serious breach came in May when the Taliban hijacked a seventeen-truck convoy of wheat from the U.N.'s World Food Program. They unloaded the sacks into their own warehouse, padlocked it and refused to return the loot. The local Taliban governor would not talk to the U.N. After an embarrassing week of pleading, the U.N. agency heads secured a meeting with the governor. But, when they arrived at his residence, it was only to glimpse him driving out.

The powers that be in Qandahar do not like foreigners. They do not like the press. They do not like the U.N. They do not even like relief workers in their midst. As the Taliban are not terribly hospitable to the forlorn expatriates shipwrecked here, there is little entertainment in town.

There is, however, "Camp Qandahar," home to the UNHCR and extended family members from the scattered U.N. agencies. Along with a handful of assorted aid workers, the residents of Camp Qandahar anchor the entire foreign community in this Afghan backwater. They serve fresh pancakes in the morning, cold beer all night, and yearn to get out. They even have their own camp song (with lyrics by Bill from Phoenix, the U.N.'s humanitarian relief coordinator in southeastern Afghanistan). Sung to the tune of "Day-O," the chorus goes like this: "Come Mr. Taliban carry me to Mecca. One rocket, two rocket, three rocket, ho! Daylight come and the mullahs go home."

Bill from Phoenix might just be the best prophet in town. Two years after their sudden appearance, the Taliban have been unmasked. They are not the devout doves the West had so desperately hoped for. And between fertilizing the opium fields and exploiting the populace as executioners, the boys from the madrasas and their maternal mullahs offer only a bleak future on the barren Afghan steppes.

ANDREW MEIER is an Alicia Patterson Fellow.

CAMPAIGN JOURNAL

PARANOIA

By Michael Lewis

August 30:

The first stop of Clinton's official 1996 campaign is Cape Girardeau, Missouri, known mainly as the place Rush Limbaugh came from. Everything is tailored for the cameras, of course, and the campaign decides with great precision what the cameras do and don't record. For example, before Clinton's first official campaign interview on the MTV bus all other TV channels are barred from filming the president boarding or leaving the MTV bus. Thus Clinton is able to make MTV view-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers feel that he is keenly interested in their problems without insulting the viewers of other channels and spooking the anti-MTV vote.

Before the MTV interview Clinton stumps a rally of maybe 25,000 putative supporters. On this first day the crowd is uniformly pro-Clinton, or at least that is how it seems to the cameras' eyes. But when you wade into the middle of the rally you find a small family of Perot voters. They wave their mad signs ("Stop the U.N." "Give Us Back Our POWs") and shout, but no one pays them much attention—that is, until a middle-aged man grabs the U.N. sign from the woman and runs for it. "Get your hands off my wife," shouts the man with the POW sign beside her as he takes off after the culprit. The culprit is a Clinton campaign volunteer, who keeps one step ahead of the Perot supporter until he reaches the edge of the crowd, maybe 100 yards from the podium. There they stop and argue. The Perot supporter isn't violent, but he does go on a bit noisily about his constitutional rights. "That man will grab a woman's sign, but he won't grab a man's sign," he says to me, the lone witness. As the culprit smokes a cigarette with shaking hands, the Perot man explains to me that he intends to press charges. "But that's my job," complains the culprit, a 60-year-old construction worker who up close is more pathetic than dangerous. "I was told to take signs away—to make sure no signs came in here." Behind him the crowd is waving maybe 5,000 Clinton-Gore signs.

Then a strange scene unfolds. First the police descend and separate the two men. They humor the sign stealer and interrogate the Perot supporter as if *he* were the criminal. They are followed by a young, fresh-faced Clinton campaign staffer, who whispers to the police to avoid making any kind of scene that would create media interest in the Perot man. Then the *Perot* man is dragged away from the media (me), leaving the culprit to stump for Clinton. "I'm a yellow dog Democrat," he says, happily. "That means I'd rather vote for a yellow dog than a damn Republican." Who can blame the Perot man for thinking that everyone is out to get him? The modern need to script every last televised detail right down to a few signs in the middle of the crowd merely feeds the paranoia of those who already feel enough of it.

By the time the struggle is over, so is Clinton's speech, which was uplifting as usual. No matter what you think of Clinton's campaign there is an undeniable joy in watching someone do something he is so good at. Traveling with Dole you are always forgetting where exactly you are; a Dole speech in Ohio is indistinguishable from a Dole speech in California. Traveling with Clinton you are reminded of not just the state but the town and sometimes the part of the town; everywhere he goes Clinton finds some way to evoke a sense of place, almost by the by, even as he delivers pretty much the same stump speech. ("I look out at the bean fields and the river bottom," he says, for example, "and I feel like I've come home.")

But the most important difference between Clinton and Dole is that Clinton is able simultaneously to address both the crowd and the television audience and make both feel as if he is speaking to them and them alone. All of the TV producers on the bus trip say the same thing: while Dole is forever mangling what are meant to be sound bites, Clinton generates so many crisp ten-second passages that, by the end of the day, they have little choice but to make Clinton look great and Dole look like a dope. This is maybe the most important difference between the two candidates, since most Americans will experience the campaign as no more than sixty days of juxtaposed sound bites.

The rest of the trip is more of the same, with a twist. In every small town 200 journalists pour off their buses and into the crowd to quiz anyone they can get their hands on about the rapidly developing Dick Morris sex scandal. Since most people have never heard of Dick Morris or his scandal, this often means telling innocent people and their children about Dick Morris in order to get a reaction. You really haven't seen modern campaign journalism until you've watched a 28-year-old TV producer from New York City explain foot fetishism to a slightly deaf 79-year-old female voter in rural Kentucky.

September 13:

I'm not going to dwell much on Clinton's official campaign, as it is pretty clear that it will consist of Clinton repeating himself ad nauseam for the next couple of months. I've decided instead to explore various groups of people whose lives Clinton has shaped, starting with the long list of those who have written books and made movies to warn the world about Bill Clinton. No sitting president has been responsible for so many new careers in the arts.

I set out first to find Larry Nichols, the Little Rock narrator of *The Clinton Chronicles*, the famed samizdat video that has sold more than 500,000 copies, according to its producer, the aptly named Jeremiah Films (*I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. Whenever I speak out, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction.* Jeremiah:20:7-8).

The Clinton Chronicles seeks to demonstrate that Clinton was (a) a heavy user of cocaine, (b) a philanderer far worse than we know, (c) the aider and abettor of an international drug ring and (d) the mastermind of a criminal conspiracy responsible for the murder of many innocent people. Probably for good reason in his mind, Larry Nichols (whose information about Clinton comes from his stint at the Arkansas Development Finance Authority) is not listed in the Little Rock phone book, so I leave a message for the investigative journalist Murray Waas asking him for Nichols's number. (I hear through the grapevine that Waas has been down in Arkansas working for *The Nation* on some complicated story involving the Clinton conspiracists.) Waas calls back and leaves a message for me saying he would love to help, but he fails to leave the phone number.

A few hours later thanks to the Arkansas journalist Gene Lyons, who now makes a living debunking Clinton conspiracy theories, I reach Larry Nichols. "Murray Waas called me a little while ago," says the nasal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

voice familiar to me from the *Chronicles*. "He told me that you are writing a hatchet job on me for THE NEW REPUBLIC." I'm stunned. Not only am I not writing a hatchet job about Larry Nichols, I am not even quite sure why I am calling Larry Nichols. Faced with the possibility that Murray Waas is out to get me, there are two possible responses. I can respond as Hillary would and engage with Murray on his terms, in which case I'll end up being guided by my own paranoia. Or I can respond as Bill would and operate on the assumption that Murray is ultimately prepared to love me. One is paranoia; the other is the antithesis of paranoia.

I opt for the Hillary approach. I call Waas and leave on his machine one of those threats intended to make him quake with fear for his life but which nine seconds after you hang up strike you as completely asinine. Waas calls back immediately. "Did you do this to me?" I ask. "I find that an insulting question," he says. The mere suggestion that I would *believe* Larry Nichols about anything is *comical*. He did *call* Nichols, he says, but he didn't talk to him about me. Now, feeling embarrassed for having been taken in by Nichols, I switch to the Bill approach. I apologize to Murray, and we share a short laugh about the nut cases down in Arkansas. "I talk to a lot of crazies down there," he says. "And they have a lot of crazy, crazy stories."

The penny drops only after I hang up: Waas called Nichols, which means he has his phone number. But if he has his phone number, and was willing to help, why didn't he give it to me when he called the first time?

September 16:

I work up the nerve to call Larry Nichols again. A long weekend has put the things Murray told him about me into perspective. It turns out he has a bad taste in his mouth about Washington journalists. He says that Murray keeps calling him on the pretense of looking into the Helen Dickey story while in fact he is looking into Larry Nichols. "Who's Helen Dickey?" "Helen Dickey," says Nichols, "is the former Clinton nanny who made the call from Washington telling people that Vince Foster had killed himself." He pauses in just the same way he does on the video, before dropping the bomb: "The problem was that she made the call fifteen minutes before the body was found."

Helen Dickey is well worth looking into, he says, but Murray has other fish to fry:

> Murray would say he was looking into the Helen Dickey affair but then after a while he says, "By the way, Larry, you got $10 million for *The Clinton Chronicles*, right?" And I'd say, "What?" Then Murray'd talk some more about Helen Dickey, and after a bit he'd say, "By the way, how much money did you make off the tapes?" I said, "Murray, what are you talking about? I didn't make any money." Then he'd call again and say, "This Helen Dickey thing is looking really good. And here's a tip for you Larry: *The Washington Post* has been contracted to attack your credibility. So please will you call me as soon as the *Post* calls you?" And so I say, "Murray, the *Post* ain't never going to call me." Then Murray would go off and tell people in Little Rock something against me, you know, try to ping-pong us, trying to put one person against the other.
>
> So finally I'd had enough. He calls one last time as I was about to get in the shower. I said, "Murray, I'm not going to *put up* with you fabricating one thing and then another." And I hang up. Then he calls back and says, "Larry, I'm going to do you a favor: this guy Lewis from THE NEW REPUBLIC is going to call you. He's been assigned to write a hatchet job on you." Sure enough, three hours later you call.

"Wait," I say, my mind reeling again in the way it does when I try for the tenth time to follow the labyrinthine connections of *The Clinton Chronicles*. On the one hand, Larry Nichols, who claims to be personally responsible for thirty-two *major* Clinton scandals, makes Deep Throat look like a piker. On the other hand at least a few of his allegations have proven to be way ahead of the curve and ended up eventually in *The Washington Post*. And the gist of his complaints about Clinton's character sounds very much like everyone else's. "Michael, you can love Bill Clinton," he says, quite reasonably, "but you need to know that Bill Clinton doesn't tell the truth." Before he hangs up he is kind enough to give me the phone number for Gennifer Flowers.

September 17:

A day in the Senate, where you can see the campaign ripple in lots of strange ways. Last week, for instance, the Dole campaign torpedoed Alan Simpson's immigration bill by insisting that it include a provision denying public education to the children of illegal immigrants. While there has been a lot of outrage about Dole's callousness, no one seems to find it odd that he got involved in the first place, or that Trent Lott sees fit to follow Dole's orders. Why should Dole have any say at all? Just a few months ago he resigned his Senate seat to demonstrate that he was beyond the petty machinations of Beltway life. Now once again he is machinating, only this time without the vested authority.

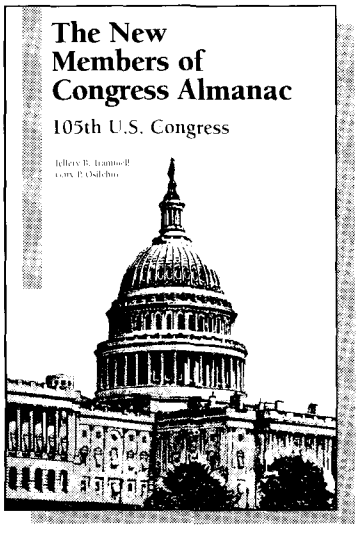
At the very moment John McCain appears live on CNN from the White House lawn to blast Clinton for his inept handling of Saddam Hussein I am alone in McCain's office, snooping around beside the dark oak desk that once belonged to Senator Barry Goldwater. I was meant to meet McCain here first thing, but the senator was summoned to a White House meeting about Iraq. The moment McCain leaves the meeting he is surrounded by reporters; throughout the day CNN will carry different sound bites from his remarks, the gist of which is that Clinton is squandering American prestige and influence. ("What they have not done is match deeds with rhetoric. If you say you are going to respond disproportionately and don't do it, there is a price to pay.")

From now until adjournment in early October, everything that happens in the Senate will be filtered through the prism of presidential politics, as it is with McCain today. Sadly, the flip side of the polemics is that all sorts of people who once were happy to speak more or less openly about Dole and Clinton are no longer so free with their thoughts. A year ago Senator Bob Kerrey could not stop talking. ("Listen to me," he said, in lan-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Don't Wait Until January to Meet the New Members of the 105th Congress...
Meet Them Only Days After the Election With
The New Members of Congress Almanac

The New Members of Congress Almanac



Available December 1, 1996, THE NEW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ALMANAC gives you the most comprehensive and insightful look at these new players only days after the election. No other publication offers this much information this soon after the election. Read it to find out key information on the new players on Capitol Hill who will help reshape virtually every aspect of the Congress — from committee assignments to the election of the Congressional leadership to the legislative agenda.

THE NEW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ALMANAC is a quick and useful reference that will familiarize you with each of the new Members of the 105th Congress. The book contains a full- page narrative on each of the new Senators and Representatives including:

- photographs
- education
- election statistics
- voter registration statistics
- professional backgrounds
- biographical sketches
- district information
- and political analysis

ORDER TODAY
ONLY $39.95

Paper. ISBN 1-886222-03-7

Send me _____ copies of THE NEW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ALMANAC
($39.95/copy plus $5 shipping and handling — plus 5.75% DC tax.)

Name _____

Title/Organization _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Signature _____

☐ Bill me for the amount of $_____

☐ Payment enclosed for the amount of $_____ made payable to **Almanac Publishing, Inc.**

☐ Charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard CARD # _____ EXP. DATE _____

Phone 202/296-2297 • Fax your order 202/223-3504
Mail your order: Almanac Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 3785, Washington, DC 20007

New Republic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

guage that Larry Nichols could never get away with. "Clinton's an unusually good liar. *Unusually* good. Do you realize that?") Today, as I wait at the bottom of the Capitol steps, Kerrey emerges and lingers for many minutes, joshing with fellow senators and calling out to friends. But at the end of the day I finally hear back from the Kerrey people that my request for five minutes of his time has been denied. "The senator's schedule is frenetic," says the staffer.

By the end of the day two new rumors about the Clintons are gathering steam. The online publication *Conspiracy Nation* reported that Hillary had hired people in the Pentagon to assassinate Dick Morris. And then a friend called to tell me that a friend told him that Clinton was sitting on his medical records to hide an old nose operation, which was necessary to repair the damage from his cocaine habit. In this environment it seems only appropriate that I meet Murray Waas for coffee.

It turns out that he is very agreeable, and I end up buying him dinner. We talk of this and that, scarcely mentioning Larry Nichols. But, before I leave, Murray cautions me about going to Little Rock. "If Larry Nichols asks you to meet him at a truck stop at one in the morning...." he begins. Don't worry, I say, now savvy to the ways of Arkansas. "It's just that they—the Clinton haters—are a little bit pissed off," he says, "and crazier than they usually are." "You mean, because Clinton is about to win a second term?" I ask. Murray doesn't immediately respond but instead smiles knowingly. "Is there some other reason they are especially pissed off and crazy?" I ask. "I'm sorry," he says, "But I'm working on the story about it."

That night before I go to bed I thank God I am a Washington investigative journalist and not one of those crackpots down in Arkansas who goes around making things up about Bill Clinton. •

The ValuJet cover-up.

FLIGHT FROM REALITY

By Michael Fumento

Has anybody seen Federico Peña? For the past few months, the Secretary of Transportation has been harder to spot than Waldo. He did, however, come out of hiding long enough to announce he won't be joining Clinton's Cabinet if the president is re-elected.

It's hard not to suspect that Peña's pending retirement has something to do with ValuJet Flight 592. Almost before the plane settled on the bottom of the swamp, Peña rushed to the Everglades to proclaim the airline safe. ValuJet has "in some cases even exceeded the safety standards that we have at the FAA," he said at a May 12 briefing in the Everglades, less than twenty-four hours after the crash. "I have flown ValuJet. ValuJet is a safe airline." A month later he shut that "safe" airline down. It would be bad enough if Peña only figured out the airline was unsafe after the crash. But it appears that he knew it before then, or at least should have known—and did nothing about it.

The first suspicious event happened on April 23 of this year, a month before the crash, when the Department of Transportation released a report titled "The Low-Cost Airline Service Revolution." The report claimed that "in the last year, American consumers have saved an estimated $6.3 billion in airline fares" because of "new low-cost, low-fare airlines." Most of the credit, Peña said in an accompanying statement, went to his boss: "These developments are, in large part, the outgrowth of President Clinton's effort to support new-entrant carriers." Clinton himself added, "Today's report is more good news for Americans who are enjoying lower fares as a result of our efforts to increase competition."

Curiously, though, one of the airlines the report repeatedly referred to as "new"—Southwest—began service in 1971. Indeed, the report omitted a crucial fact—that Southwest accounted for three-fourths of the flights of the low-cost carriers. Without Southwest, the $6.3 billion in savings would have been perhaps a bit over a billion, according to Michael Boyd, president of Aviation Systems Research Corporation of Golden, Colorado. Excluding Southwest, low-cost carriers handle less than 3 percent of U.S. passenger traffic.

But there is something more ominous about the inclusion of Southwest in the April 23 report. Although the study contains no safety data, Peña claimed in his statement that the start-up airlines were just as safe as the higher-priced carriers. "All these airlines are safe," he said. "They are safe to fly. They are competent." With

MICHAEL FUMENTO is a science correspondent for *Reason* magazine and has written previously on Federico Peña and the Denver International Airport.

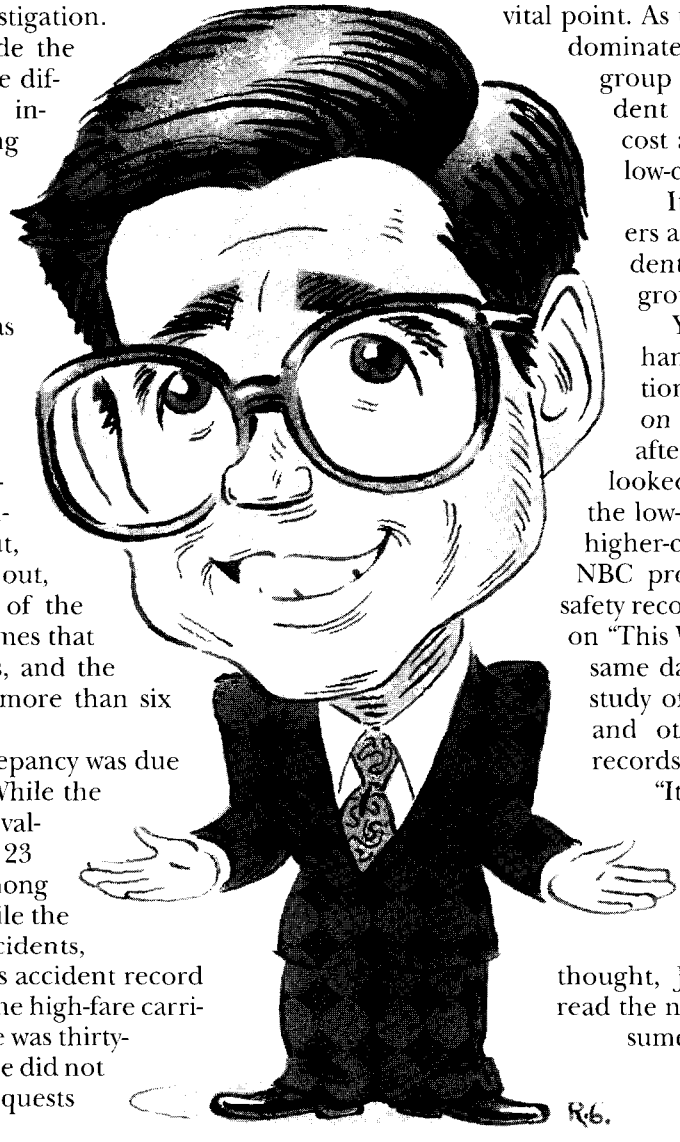
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the glaring exception of one airline, he was right. That airline was ValuJet.

On May 2, just nine days before the ValuJet crash, the FAA produced a nine-page report on the safety records of the various new airlines. It was ordered by Anthony Broderick, who was then the FAA's associate administrator of regulation and certification. (Broderick quickly resigned after the accident and was widely seen as Peña's scapegoat.) The report was prepared by Bob Matthews, an analyst with the FAA's Office of Accident Investigation. Matthews told me he made the explicit decision to provide different sets of data—one including and one excluding Southwest. The results were startling. Far from "exceeding" FAA standards, ValuJet's record was a nightmare.

When Southwest was included, the overall accident rate of the ten low-cost carriers was virtually the same as that of the eight higher-priced carriers, and the serious accident rate was identical. But, when Southwest was taken out, the overall accident rate of the start-ups jumped to four times that of the established carriers, and the serious accident rate was more than six times greater.

Virtually all of this discrepancy was due to ValuJet's poor record. While the other eight true start-ups evaluated in Peña's April 23 report had one accident among them, ValuJet had five. While the others had no serious accidents, ValuJet had three. ValuJet's accident record was fourteen times that of the high-fare carriers. Its serious accident rate was thirty-two times higher. The airline did not respond to my repeated requests for comment.



FEDERICO PEÑA BY ROBERT GROSSMAN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

I contacted the office of David Hinson, Peña's appointee as head of the FAA, to find out when he first saw the report. Hinson, through his press spokesman Les Dorr, told me I would have to file a Freedom of Information Act request (FOIA) to get that information. FOIA requests are intended to get the government to release documents, not to get government officials to utter one-sentence answers to one-sentence questions. In other words, Hinson didn't want to say.

But the more important question is when Peña saw the May 2 report. According to his press spokesman Bill Schulz, it was not until shortly after Flight 592 went down. At that time, Peña was given a packet of material, including the report to prepare him for the inevitable barrage of questions. Bob Matthews confirms this. "Peña I'm sure got it for the first time at the accident site." Indeed, it was Matthews who faxed it to him. "That's when I put the note on the cover," he said.

The note on the cover? Yes, though the report was concise enough that all of the accident data fit on a single page, Matthews did not want to take any chances that Peña would miss what appeared to be a very vital point. As the note stated, "Southwest so dominates the data for the low-cost group that this finding [of an accident rate comparable to the high-cost airlines] is not transferable to low-cost carriers in general."

It also said that "just two carriers account for all five serious accidents recorded for this expanded group (ValuJet and Tower)."

Yet, with this report in his hands, Peña maintained the fiction of equivalent safety records on two television shows the day after the ValuJet crash. "We've looked at the safety record of both the low-cost carriers and the so-called higher-cost carriers," he said on the NBC program "Sunday Today." "The safety records ... are comparable." Then, on "This Week with David Brinkley" that same day, he said, "We recently did a study of the safety record of low-cost and other airlines, and the safety records are comparable."

"It [the May 2 report] was literally in his hand, and you could literally see the note on the cover," exclaimed one FAA official, who insisted on anonymity. "I thought, Jesus Christ, why didn't you read the note on the cover?" Which presumes, of course, that he hadn't.

Naturally reporters were curious to see the report themselves, and on May 16 the DOT turned a somewhat revised, but just as damning, version over to *The Chicago Tribune*. It was still accompanied by a spin-doctoring press release claiming the report "concludes that since 1990, there has been little difference between low-cost and major airlines in the rates for accidents, runway incursions [sliding off the runway], and pilot deviations." There was no mention that the May 2 report had done a breakdown excluding Southwest. Shortly thereafter, Broderick—who Matthews says has an excellent reputation at FAA—resigned.

"It's wink, wink, we can't tell the public," Department

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Transportation Inspector General Mary Schiavo told the House Aviation Subcommittee during its June 26 hearings. "Why shouldn't the public know about this report on ValuJet on May 2? I bet a few people wouldn't be on that plane." Schiavo resigned on July 8, both out of frustration and a desire to spend more time with her family, she says.

The problem isn't just that Peña misrepresented the May 2 report, but that he should have known about the data long before the report appeared. "It didn't have anything in it that Tony [Anthony Broderick] didn't already know," Matthews told me. "I don't know that it told anybody anything new around here. It was a two- to three-hour piece of work. That data is pretty easily available to anybody. It's pretty straightforward stuff; it wasn't rocket science."

Documents obtained from the FAA by *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* after the ValuJet crash showed at least four inspections of the airline since 1993 reporting "widespread safety problems that were neither fully investigated nor corrected," according to the paper. Indeed, a Defense Department inspection of the airline's maintenance oversight in August 1995 declared: "Evaluation: Unsatisfactory."

Two months before that, a ValuJet plane beginning a takeoff to Miami was destroyed after parts of an engine flew into the fuselage, igniting a fire that consumed the plane. Luckily, no one was killed. A recent investigation found that the engine, bought from a Turkish firm, had been flying with a visible crack for four years.

By February 7 of this year, the situation was so critical that staffers from the Inspector General's office met with FAA inspectors in Atlanta to discuss ValuJet's problems. Documents show the IG's staff talked about more than a dozen safety problems at the airline. Schiavo said later that she decided then, "I would not get on [ValuJet] because of the number of incidents that have been reported." Seven days later, an internal FAA memo suggested that ValuJet be shut down pending recertification. On May 6, just five days before Flight 592 went down, an FAA preliminary draft report found more than 100 ValuJet safety violations. All this prompted Schiavo to write an essay in *Newsweek* saying she would not fly on ValuJet. Alas, although written before the crash, it appeared afterwards.

The Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), which represents flight attendants at ValuJet and many other airlines, has petitioned the FAA to forbid ValuJet to fly again under its current management. "If the [DOT] abandons its previous, tougher approach simply to help ValuJet's executives stay in place, the safety of the entire industry will soon be allowed to fall to ValuJet's level," Patricia Friend, the union's international president, said in a statement. The attendants' request was denied, and on August 29 the FAA gave ValuJet tentative approval to resume certain flights.

Even before ValuJet's initial grounding, the AFA was getting word from its members about the airline, and the word was they were scared. "We informed the FAA we were aware of safety problems," spokeswoman Jill Gallagher told me. "Our president [Friend] was a United Airlines flight attendant for thirty years, and she had six unscheduled landings in her thirty years. In the first six months of this year ValuJet had fifty-nine unscheduled landings. I have a list of flight attendants who quit because of the safety problems," says Gallagher. Or were fired. One ValuJet flight attendant, she says, "called the FAA emergency hotline and reported a safety violation, and the FAA pretty much blew it off, saying it was a union matter. Seven days later the flight attendant was fired. Later it was found it was in fact a true safety violation, yet the FAA didn't take action, saying the airline had acted to mitigate it."

The violation was that a child over the age of 2 was allowed to sit on a parent's lap instead of being buckled into a seat. On the day after the crash of Flight 592 the death toll increased by one when it was found that a 4-year-old was sitting on a parent's lap.

Testifying before Congress on June 17, the day Peña finally ordered ValuJet shut down, Schiavo said she repeatedly brought up the ValuJet problem with Peña's chief of staff, Ann Bormolini. Peña, though, claims Bormolini never relayed Schiavo's concerns. Bormolini quit almost immediately after the crash and went to Denver. She's now harder to find than Salman Rushdie. Three different DOT press officers said they asked their superiors where to contact her and were given no response. Schiavo, for one, doesn't believe Peña's version. "To my amazement," she told me, "Peña and Hinson said they knew nothing about the ValuJet concerns. Is it logical to assume that the chief of staff [Bormolini] would have only talked to me about what was going on at ValuJet but not to Peña or Hinson?" Schiavo has another explanation. Bormolini had told her that the airline knew "that the IG's office was snooping around ValuJet" (Schiavo's words). "I was floored, because it was apparent to me that somebody at DOT had tipped off ValuJet," she says. "I wondered how tough the FAA would be. I thought they might be cut some slack."

But why would Peña have lied about ValuJet? His history as Denver mayor may provide some clue. He began his reign during the '80s by declaring Denver "poised for greatness," but it soon became clear that he was thinking more of himself than the city. He billed his largest megaproject, the Denver International Airport, as the second largest in the nation. Located at the beginning of Peña Boulevard, it turned out to be the second largest in Denver. The bill was three times what the locals were told it would be. What Peña got was praise from President Clinton and a place in the new administration.

Boyd thinks the ValuJet fiasco happened for the same reason. It all goes back to the April 23 report claiming the Clinton administration was saving the public $6.3 billion because of its promotion of low-cost carriers. "It was a suck-up report to make his boss look like a star," says Boyd. "One hundred and ten people were sacrificed for politics in an election year. And Federico Peña has their blood on his hands." •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fear and the roots of affirmative action.

THE RACE NOT RUN

By Shelby Steele

President Clinton, General Colin Powell and former Senator Bob Dole share a fascinating if dubious distinction: they have all pulled back from a principled disenchantment with preferential affirmative action into a qualified tolerance of it. Dole is the least tolerant of the three, yet even he has lost enthusiasm for legislation he himself introduced last year to end it, and while tacitly supporting the California Civil Rights Initiative he has distanced himself from it. In his 1995 autobiography Powell declared, "If it leads to preferential treatment ... I am opposed," but by this summer's Republican convention he had emerged as one of affirmative action's most vocal proponents. All three claim it was principle that first led them to question the double standard inherent in race and gender preferences. But then, after signaling their doubts, each seemed to run into something. There were hesitations, long investigations and, finally, very calculated repositionings. Something chastened them into an embarrassing pragmatism, in which principle seemed premature and even extreme and in which the crafted statement seemed wiser than the grandstand.

I don't think it was some fresh encounter with American racism. Nor do I believe that people who support affirmative action do so because they believe discrimination is rampant in America. Preferential policies are most vigorously supported in institutions like universities, government agencies and corporations, where all agree that discrimination has sharply declined over the last thirty years. (With the glaring exception of Asians, when was the last time a person of color was discriminated against in admissions at an American university?) I am also unconvinced that "diversity" really justifies preferences for most people. It is simply not plausible that people can muster the sort of passion we see in many supporters of preferences for an idea as amorphous as diversity—an idea no two people define in the same way. Diversity is a word-cover, a term of high sentiment that we use when we don't know, or are unwilling to admit, what really motivates us.

So I don't think Clinton, Powell and Dole ran into diversity. I believe they hit what I have elsewhere called racial vulnerability—the fact that blacks and whites living today are remarkably vulnerable to their race's historical reputations and stereotypes. An unacknowledged dilemma for Americans of racial goodwill is that we can all be shamed by the same sad racial history that we work to overcome.

The main stereotypes are that whites are racist and blacks are inferior. A white or black child born in America today, utterly fresh to the world, will grow up under either the first Kafkaesque accusation or the second. They will not necessarily believe what history accuses them of—stereotypes are internalized as self-doubt rather than as belief. But even whites who are as free of racism as it is possible to be will be vulnerable to powerful doubts about their racial innocence when blacks accuse them of racism. In fact, this vulnerability may cause *more* anxiety in whites who have earnestly worked to put themselves beyond racism, since their investment in racial innocence is greater. Conversely, blacks are outraged at a book like *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein because it triggers their vulnerability to the stereotype of inferiority.

It doesn't matter that the stereotype of black inferiority was never inherently true while the accusation of white racism essentially was. Racial vulnerability is *situational*, an outgrowth of integrated situations *today* in which the mere presence of the other race opens our vulnerability to stereotypes of our own. The sometimes awkward labor of integrated situations has to do with the pains we must take not to set off each other's vulnerabilities—an effort that ironically requires us to memorize the damning stereotypes of each other's group.

These are the racial vulnerabilities that I believe Clinton, Powell, Dole and millions of other Americans run into when they have to think seriously about group preferences. The affirmative action debate of the last few years is the *situation* that has triggered the racial vulnerabilities of many Americans. And no doubt it was suppressed for the two decades since its birth to keep this from happening. It is a measure of how fundamentally wrong group preferences are that this debate

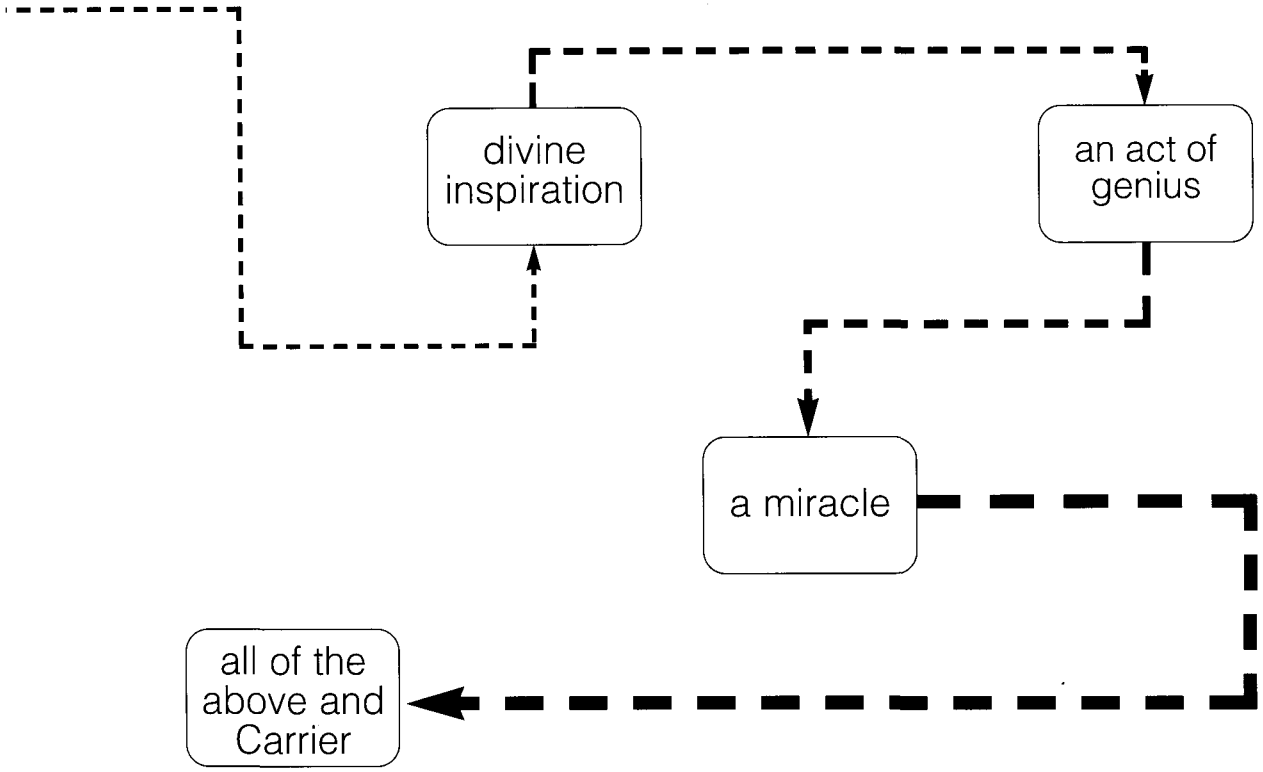
continued on page 26

SHELBY STEELE is a research fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What does it take to preserve a 450-year-old treasure?



Four and a half centuries of smoke from votive candles combined with modern air pollution to mask the glory of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.

It took an inspired clergy, the genius of patient artisans, and the miracle of chemistry to restore its original vibrant beauty.

And to keep it that way?

A specially designed climate control system for comfortable temperatures and clean air from this time forth.

And the people chosen to provide all this?

Carrier.

Perhaps because Carrier is to air conditioning what Otis is to elevators and Sikorsky is to helicopters: *The creator of the industry.*

Be there first.

Hamilton Standard UT Automotive United Technologies

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could no longer be evaded despite the vulnerabilities it has exposed us to.

Because we find our vulnerabilities unbearable, we *recompose* them into narratives we can live with. I don't say to myself that, as a black person, integrated situations trigger my vulnerabilities because I worry unconsciously that I might do something to *confirm* an ugly stereotype of blacks. I instead tell myself that such situations are ripe with racism and, thus, stacked against me.

Whites on the left tend to recompose their vulnerability to the stereotype of whites as racists into an exaggerated deference toward minorities. The white liberal does not say he feels vulnerable to being arbitrarily shamed by the charge of racism or that on some level he may doubt himself in that regard. He says instead that his racial goodwill, his inherent racial innocence, commits him to a politics in which deference to black victimization is a kind of virtuous activism. (Of course, not all whites respond to black accusations with uncritical deference. Some try to ignore them, and others relieve their anxiety with anger. But the anxiety itself is common to whites of all ideologies.)

One of the main reasons we make bad public policy around race—and a policy like group preferences that becomes more divisive with time is undoubtedly bad—is that we use these policies to confirm the recomposed version of ourselves rather than to overcome our actual vulnerabilities. Preferences gave liberal whites the chance to show deference to black victimization, and they give the black leadership the chance to keep asserting that racism is the main problem that blacks face. One recomposition symbiotically feeds the other through a preferential policy that is unfair on its face.

However, while there is some truth in these recompositions (deference sometimes *is* a display of real virtue, and victimization sometimes *does* explain black difficulty), the far greater truth is in the vulnerabilities that produce them. Neither race has yet done what is necessary to affirm itself against the accusations it is vulnerable to. An activism of deference will not affirm that whites are not racists (uncritical deference to the black "victim" is a form of racism). And the insistence that black difficulty is still the result of racism will not affirm blacks against the stereotype of inferiority.

These vulnerabilities are America's true racial challenge. A healthy democracy cannot abide white racism or the developmental inferiority imposed on blacks by America's history of racism. Yet even our thinking about race is controlled by a deferential language grounded in our recompositions. Words like "diversity," "multiculturalism," "inclusion" and "pluralism" say little more than that white deference answers minority victimization. And out of this disingenuous language universities, government agencies and corporations make all manner of race-based, preferential policies that again highlight white deference as the redemption of black victimization. Such policy amounts to a form of protectionism: it gives credence to our recompositions so we don't have to face our racial vulnerabilities.

Protectionism may be the truest purpose of affirmative action. By supporting it whites agree to see blacks as victims rather than as inferiors, and in return blacks agree to see whites as people of racial goodwill rather than as racists. Sadly, this quid pro quo, in which deference to the other race's vulnerability buys protection from one's own, is the only real contract that exists between blacks and whites on a policy level.

After almost thirty years of living with this contract, deference has become the American idea of social virtue. At the center of our national social conscience is the idea that virtue is served more by helping people hide from their vulnerabilities than by helping them to overcome them. Such a concept of virtue makes many good things bad. Merit, excellence, individual initiative, achievement are now dishonored in our society (at least in relation to minorities) because they are not deferential or protective. They buy whites no currency with blacks and blacks no currency with whites. In pursuing excellence or taking initiative we inevitably meet with setbacks and failures—experiences that seem to confirm ugly stereotypes of inferiority. Because these principles expose us to the stereotypes that make us vulnerable, we come to think of them as mean and oppressive—despite the fact that they are the only principles that can truly help us conquer our vulnerabilities. Our contract of mutual protection through deference forces us into a relativism that asks nothing much of anybody. What does it take to celebrate diversity? And yet, with the mere announcement that you favor it, you can win protection from the vulnerabilities that haunt you.

Political correctness, in all its myriad manifestations, is deferential relativism taken to the level of manners. It is the code that enforces mutual protection through deference in daily life. P.C. forces us to take each other's recompositions with grave seriousness and to ignore the real vulnerabilities behind them as a matter of good taste.

When President Clinton says of affirmative action "mend it, don't end it," he is going with relativism against difficult principle not only to buy protection from the likes of Jesse Jackson (a master at the manipulation of white vulnerability), but also to reaffirm this larger contract between blacks and whites. This contract keeps the various elements of his political base together—blacks, other minorities, women and liberals in general—all of whom now identify social virtue with deference.

So, in what has become one of the central ironies of contemporary liberalism, Clinton will show more deference to blacks than others yet do less than others to help them confront and overcome their vulnerabilities. He will choose protective policies like affirmative action over policies that put high expectations

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Goal line

In a Republican convention largely devoid of news, vice presidential nominee Jack Kemp's reversal on affirmative action made the front page. Before joining the Republican ticket, Kemp had criticized the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI) designed to end publicly sponsored race and gender preferences. But, in an interview with Tom Brokaw in San Diego, Kemp said he had adopted Bob Dole's position in support of CCRI.

The flip-flop was ridiculed by a number of commentators, including *Washington Post* columnist Richard Cohen, who called it a "swift political lobotomy." But Kemp's shift was less dramatic than his critics claim—he was never an outright supporter of affirmative action. Like many Americans, Kemp was, and is, searching for a third way, beyond all or nothing.

"Affirmative action based on quotas is wrong," Kemp wrote in a lengthy August 1995 op-ed in *The Washington Post*. "Counting by race in order to remedy past wrongs or rewarding special groups by taking from others perpetuates and even deepens the divisions between us."

Kemp criticized President Clinton's "mend it, not end it" approach as "more of a bumper sticker than a policy." But Kemp also criticized Republicans, noting "critics must offer much more than just opposition and reproach. We know what they are against, but what are they for?"

Kemp offered his own alternative: need-based affirmative action. In October, Kemp explained his thinking further. Testifying before a Senate committee, he endorsed a plan to focus contracting set-asides in economically disadvantaged areas instead of basing them on race. The 1968 Kerner Commission Report was wrong to identify our problem as black vs. white, he said: "We're not divided by race so much as economics." Kemp's line of thinking is refreshing. Liberals are right to say that society has not provided a level playing field, and conservatives are right to say that current preference programs have deepened racial antagonism. Need-based affirmative action is a compromise that attempts to provide opportunity for the poor, many of whom are people of color, without resorting to racially divisive measures.

For a politician with views like Kemp, the California Civil Rights Initiative presents a dilemma. On the one hand, CCRI affirms the principle of color-blindness that Kemp generally supports. CCRI eliminates state-sponsored race and gender preferences, not all affirmative action programs. It permits efforts to cast a wider racial net in recruitment, as well as race-neutral class-based programs. Indeed, Tom Wood, one of the architects of CCRI, says he supports need-based affirmative action for entry-level jobs and college admissions. According to a recent *Los Angeles Times* poll, CCRI enjoys 2 to 1 support among voters.

So why did Kemp initially oppose CCRI? For one thing, the initiative fails Kemp's test that opponents should not just repeal and outlaw but should also build up. And there is another, more important concern: that the initiative undercuts the signal Kemp wants to send to blacks that the Republican Party cares about their well-being. Kemp is trying, says longtime adviser Jude Wanniski, "to overcome the cynicism" of the black community, which was "booted out of the Republican Party" as part of the so-called Southern Strategy. An effort to simply repeal affirmative action may be interpreted by blacks, as sociologist Nathan Glazer notes, "as a terrible rejection by an indifferent and hostile society."

But there are surely better ways to show concern for black voters than by promising them set-asides. Kemp and other Republicans can campaign vigorously in black areas, as Kemp has already begun to do. There they will discover that support for racial preferences is quite mixed. They can argue for greater funding for enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. Most importantly, they can emphasize that Martin Luther King Jr. rejected racial preferences as morally and politically troublesome, favoring instead a broader Poor People's Campaign and a bill of rights to lift all disadvantaged citizens.

Kemp worried that conservatives' support for CCRI fit into a long history of race baiting: "[R]ace-based politics is even more wrong [than racial preferences] and must be repudiated by men and women of civility and compassion," he wrote in his *Washington Post* op-ed. Kemp told reporters in July 1995, "If '96 is run on dividing the races, I will not participate."

The question then becomes: Is CCRI about eliminating unjustified racial preferences, or is it about race-based politics? Put differently, is there any way that conservatives can oppose racial preferences without dividing the races? There is ample reason to be skeptical of a Republican-driven reform. After all, the last two Republican presidents, Ronald Reagan and George Bush, were both opponents of the original Civil Rights Act of 1964. Color-blindness became their mantra only after whites began to feel cheated by affirmative action. Bob Dole's record is no better: he began to oppose preferences only after the "angry white male election" of 1994 revealed the issue's political potency.

But Kemp, unlike many Republicans, has the credibility to assert the color-blind principle as something more than an appeal to white anger. "If he doesn't have the standing," says Peter Wehner of Empower America, the think tank founded by Kemp and William Bennett, "then probably no one does." Like Robert Kennedy, who could be for "law and order" without appearing racist, Kemp might be able to speak for color-blindness in a way that isn't simply an excuse for perpetuating white advantage. While many in the press simplistically report the affirmative action debate as a matter of interests—are you for blacks or against them?—Kemp could raise the debate to a discussion of values, to argue that it is the policy of racial preference itself which is divisive, not efforts to reform it.

A couple of years ago, two national politicians seemed particularly well-suited to moving us out of the affirmative action thicket to need-based programs. One was Bill Clinton, who has an unusually strong connection with black America, and who spoke briefly of moving toward "need-based programs where we can because they work better and have a bigger impact and generate broader [public] support." But the president caved in to special interest pressure and lost the moment.

The other is Jack Kemp. With a record of commitment to the poor, particularly African Americans, virtually unparalleled among Republican politicians, Kemp may help move our society to a compassionate color-blindness. The Democrats, by holding fast to an increasingly discredited preference regime, have handed him a golden opportunity.

RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG

RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG, a Fellow at the Center for National Policy, is author of *The Remedy: Class, Race, and Affirmative Action* (Basic Books).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before deference, that require performance as a condition of special help, that support individuals rather than groups, and that show compassion by insisting on difficult principles. Were he to do anything else, he would not only look "mean" but would break his contract with a crucial segment of his constituency. If "mending" the old contract hid blacks from the challenge of their vulnerability, it also protected him from the risk of his.

And if Colin Powell were to challenge affirmative action, and therefore this larger contract, it would seem as if the most popular black man in America was ripping away the recomposition (racism and victimization) by which his own group protects its esteem. He would throw his people open to their historic vulnerability to the myth of black inferiority. In a culture where deference and self-protection are virtue, this would be mean and extreme. Running squarely into this, Powell, like Clinton before him, chose relativism over difficult principle. Affirmative action was okay because the playing field was "unlevel," he said, aligning himself with his race's recomposed version of its situation. ("Unlevel" meaning that racism still largely explains black difficulty.) And this brought the general back into the American racial contract after the denunciation of preferences in his autobiography had caused many to wonder where he stood.

Though Bob Dole articulately denounces group preferences, it is also true that he shelved his own piece of legislation (the Dole-Canady bill) to end them in the federal government and stepped back a little from the California Civil Rights Initiative, which would end them in California's state government. In these latter moves—these small retreats—he displayed the deference that he hoped would buy him some protection from his racial vulnerability—the stereotype that as a white male Republican he was probably racially intolerant. Clearly, the selection of Jack Kemp as his running mate was a part of this deferential display, since Kemp has great credibility in the black community. But Kemp will not work well as an offer of deference because he withdrew his support of affirmative action to join the ticket. The larger point is that a natural ideological opponent of affirmative action (with an honorable civil rights record) like Dole was racially vulnerable and therefore subject to the same contract as Clinton, Powell and all other Americans.

I think one reason the Republicans are having trouble transforming the '94 shift to the right into a presidential victory is that Dole and the much maligned Newt Gingrich were out of sync with the idea of social virtue as deference. In fact, the Republican revolution was, in many ways, an assault on this very idea of virtue. But without deferential virtue they had no protection from the stereotype that portrayed Republicans as racially intolerant. They had no way of joining the larger contract between blacks and whites, no way to buy favor. Barking principles at affirmative action rather than whispering deference, it looked as if they were mean and extreme, against equality itself.

Thus, their recent convention was a veritable fireworks display of deferential liberalisms—with words like "inclusion" and "diversity" finding their way into every major speech. Dole got good press coverage, and a public opinion boost, after this deferential convention, but without affirmative action he has no concrete way to join the contract and stave off negative stereotypes of white male Republicans. Reagan and Bush kept affirmative action out of play by quietly going along with it—a deferential gesture that kept stereotypes at bay and brought them into the contract. Dole is the first presidential candidate in over thirty years who, despite his belated shows of deference, has ended up outside this contract. He stands in new political territory.

We have to start over from a simple truth: all protection from racial vulnerability is illusion. All our recompositions only recycle the old stereotypes and expand our vulnerability to them. Today, after decades of deferential racial reform, blacks and whites are as vulnerable as ever to the legends of black inferiority and white racism. In truth, racial oppression would not have been oppression if it had not imposed developmental inferiority on blacks. And history makes it clear that whites are quite capable of blithely living with and practicing the most horrific kind of social evil. Oppression leaves no innocent people in its wake, its victims included. If whites have the guilt of oppression, blacks have the shame of subjugation. Instead of recomposing to assert an innocence we don't have, we ought to let the vulnerabilities themselves guide our policy-making on race. And, of course, the test of our sincerity in this will be whether we allow those difficult non-deferential principles, like excellence, hard work and honesty across racial lines, to have the same virtuous stature in reform as deference.

When Clinton, Powell and Dole were forced to take positions on preferences, they encountered fear. Affirmative action is based on an entrenched and familiar recomposition—white goodwill redeeming black victimization. What happens if we get rid of it? How will we know what to expect of each other? Having recomposed our fear for so long, we now believe in it more than ever. I often hear other blacks say that black students will never have the SAT scores of whites or Asians. I hear college professors say that without affirmative action blacks will all but disappear from higher education—as though we ought to make policy on the presumption of permanent black inferiority. Others say that it is more difficult for blacks to overcome the developmental inferiority imposed on us than for whites to overcome the racism that imposed it. This, I think, is arguable, but it makes no difference. We will not overcome history until blacks are competitive with all others and no longer the objects of positive or negative discrimination.

The fear that we are what history says we are is what waits on the other side of affirmative action. It would be a good sign of things to come if we could at least say so. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE HARD QUESTIONS

Race for the cure

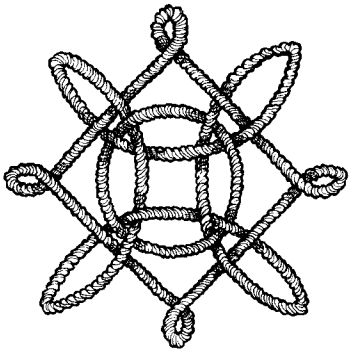
Over the past several years, people of mixed race have been pushing for the addition of a "multiracial" category to the Census. One can only be sympathetic to the desire of increasing numbers of people whose parents are of different races to escape from a forced choice between "black," "white" or a dazzling array of Asian and Pacific Islander groups, all of which are considered separate "races" on our confusing Census forms.

Black and Hispanic groups, for their part, worry that a multiracial box would reduce their numbers. Though their fears are not altogether imaginary, they are, according to the most recent government studies, at least exaggerated. Only about 1.5 percent of Americans would select the new "multiracial" designation (that is, about 4 million people). Still, many black and Hispanic organizations resist the change.

This burgeoning controversy has raised an important question. Why has the Census gotten so deeply into this business of trying to make ever more refined racial and ethnic classifications at all? Race first became a factor in the Census because the government needed to count slaves to fulfill its constitutional duty of apportioning representatives to the states. Five slaves were deemed equal to three whites, and this served to reduce the number of members of Congress from the slave states. The Census also counted free blacks. From this modest beginning, a few other ethnic and racial categories were added over time as a result of immigration. But it is only in the last few decades that the number of categories has exploded.

The Census short form, which must be filled out for every American, is now an astonishing document, more than two-fifths of it devoted to racial and ethnic questions. The question that asks the person's race is followed by various boxes to check, from white and black to Samoan and Guamanian. The Census considers every Asian group a separate "race." Native Americans are also considered a separate race. Then the government asks: "Is this person Hispanic?" with follow-up prodding to determine just what kind of Hispanic the person is, including a list of helpful options such as Argentinean, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran and, surprisingly, Spaniard. Finally, there is a question on "ancestry," with more helpful hints. (Among them: You cannot answer "Jewish." That is "religion," a strict no-no on the Census.)

But how many Americans can properly distinguish between "race," "ancestry" and "Hispanic origin"? When the "multiracial" alternative was tested by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a good number of people answered, "yes, I am multiracial," but on follow-up explained they were of mixed Irish and Italian descent—which of course is not what the advocates of the multiracial category were after at all.



The relatively new question on "ancestry" is there to please various ethnic-group advocates who want to determine their numbers. Previously the Census had asked whether a person was foreign-born, and in which country, and whether that person's parents were foreign-born, and in which country. So, while it was possible to determine the numbers of first- and second-generation Irish, or Italians, or Poles, the third generation disappeared into the general, undifferentiated category of native-born Americans.

In the 1970s, with the revival of ethnic identities as points of pride rather than something to be gotten over, the "ancestry" question was added. Then we had an estimate of all Americans of Italian or Irish descent, not only those of the first or second generation. But strange things happened. It turned out that answers varied greatly depending on the prompts. Many respondents wanted to be just Americans, and nothing more, and many were of such varied ancestries that the effort to make any sense of the results was daunting. Were there really 40 million Americans of Irish ancestry? (There are only 5 million in Ireland, north and south.)

Rather than add yet another category and increase the confusion, I have a radical solution (though it's probably a long shot): reduce the number of categories—race, ancestry, Hispanic group—to those that people can answer with some degree of reliability and that are important for public policy. The tremendous rise in the amount of intermarriage among the various groups, racial and ethnic, is reason enough to drop the ancestry question. In every European-origin group well over half marry outside the group. As this pattern continues, the ethnicity of the children becomes ever more vestigial and symbolic, and their answer to the ancestry question ever less meaningful. The race question, insofar as it deals with Asians, is increasingly irrelevant. Marriage outside that group runs 30 percent or more in the second generation. For Hispanics, outmarriage is just as high. Much has been made of Census estimates that by the year 2050 fewer than half of all Americans will be, as that inelegant Census formulation has it, "non-Hispanic white." But long before that date the distinction will have lost the portentous meaning it now carries. The differences between Asians, Hispanics and whites, except for immigrants and their children, will simply not mean much.

There remains one exception to this pattern of mingling and merging of races: blacks. Despite recent increases in intermarriage between blacks and others, the number of such marriages is of a completely different order of magnitude from the one-third to one-quarter outmarriage rates we see among Asians and Hispanics. This is despite the fact that so many Asians and Hispanics are recent immigrants and could be expected to be more insular.

Race in America means blacks, as a result of our long, sad, history, and it is of course blacks for whom the numbers are important, to rate our progress, or lack of it, in achieving equality. That is the only race that counts. There is no reason to count Asian groups to the nth generation. In any case, intermarriage will make the effort futile in a few decades. There is no need to count American Indians, either. The figures have been inflated wildly in the last two counts as people with only a fraction of Indian ancestry call themselves American Indians. And there is no need to record "Hispanicity," as if it were an indelible mark impervious to American assimilation.

Ideally, the Census should ask only two or three questions about race or ethnicity: Are you black? Where were you born? Where were your parents born? That would tell us all we really need to know or can know with any degree of accuracy. Politically, though, this sensible solution is quite impossible, and so all Americans will have to struggle with the lengthy and basically pointless interrogation on their race and ethnicity.

NATHAN GLAZER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Quest and Questioning

Al Pacino has appeared in several theater productions of *Richard III*, and in **Looking for Richard** (Fox Searchlight) he shows that he is still working on the play and the role. Pacino directed this film and co-wrote it, insofar as it *is* written, with Frederic Kimball; and he co-produced it with Michael Hadge. Nominally it's an attempt to explicate the play to those terrified of Shakespeare, terrified of understanding Shakespeare. As explication it's dispersed, discursive, capricious, wild, but as an outburst of energy, an actors' holiday for Pacino and a lot of friends, including some non-actors, it's highly engaging.

The film opens and closes with a panning shot of The Cloisters, the medieval museum at the north end of Manhattan where some of it was shot, while a voice—not Pacino's—gives us Prospero's "These our actors" speech from *The Tempest*. And there's a neatly droll scene with Shakespeare "himself" just after the opening shot and another just before the closing one. Between these two sets of parentheses the film cavorts, crosscuts and cartwheels, through rehearsals of *Richard* blended with discussions and arguments among the cast, a visit to the rebuilt Globe Theatre in London and to Shakespeare's birthplace, snippets of interviews about Shakespeare with Vanessa Redgrave and Derek Jacobi and Kenneth Branagh and John Gielgud and a couple of Shakespeare scholars, as well as sidewalk interviews with passersby wherever Pacino happens to be shooting.

All this is made more or less cogent by a nimble team of editors headed by Pasquale Buba. Omnipresent is a score by Howard Shore that is not always helpful. (A heavenly choir while Richard woos Lady Anne next to the corpse of the husband whom he has murdered? Churchiness, even if satirically intended, during one of the most scathingly psychosexual encounters in all of Shakespeare?)

Some scenes are shown in a bit more than fragmentary form—the murder of Clarence (Alec Baldwin), the dismissal of Hastings (Kevin Conway, who is notably solid), Bosworth Field—but mostly we are showered with Shakespeare confetti while voice-overs and a few titles try to clarify this "search" for Richard. Paradoxically, it's the confetti feeling that keeps the picture entertaining, its high spirits that are maintained even with this dark subject, the comments, outbursts, jokes of the actors and the others involved. (At one point, off-stage but not off-camera, Baldwin says: "We're doing this for forty dollars a day and all the doughnuts we can eat.")

We may wonder why there's all this fuss about clarifying one of Shakespeare's less complex plays, an investigation that went on over several years, that was returned to again and again when the necessary people were available. (We see Pacino shaved, unshaved, and bearded, all intermixed.) One reason is that Pacino could afford to do it, doughnuts and all, and had lots of friends who wanted to join him in a sort of wacky busman's holiday.

But textual explication doesn't seem to me the basic reason for this film. It's a very slim gloss of the play; if Pacino does Richard on stage again, this picture would be of limited use as a two-hour program note. The real reason for the film seems to be that Pacino is, as actor, unsatisfied with film acting alone and with a filmic reputation. It's not just that Hollywood won't let him do Shakespeare on film: he also does other playwrights when he returns to the theater, and he's not permitted to do them on film either. *Looking for Richard* advertises, to the many millions who know Pacino only as a film star, the range of his acting ambitions, a range that most of his fans don't know.

I saw his off-Broadway debut in 1968 and have seen several of his subsequent theater appearances, but not his Richard. The fragments of it visible here show a mixture of styles from nudge-in-the-ribs vernacular to a touch of the grand. What his whole performance might be is hard to say. In any case, this romp-and-tribute is unique: I know of no previous instance in which a film star wanted to assure his film public that he was more than a film star.

The art of film is not advanced by arty films. A Japanese film called **Maborosi** (Milestone) runs the risk of artiness with its very opening shots; but it never slips over the edge. One factor that safeguards it from preciousness, that keeps it a work of art, is that the director, Hirokazu Kore-eda, knows exactly the danger he is in and why he is facing it.

Kore-eda, now 33, has made several documentaries, but this is his first feature. Yoshihisa Ogita adapted the screen-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

American Buffalo. *David Mamet's quasi-mythic play, about two men in a junk shop and a bungled robbery, still fascinates with its hyper-realism. Dustin Hoffman and Dennis Franz are at least good enough to make it all intense. (Reviewed 9/16 & 23/96)* **Manny and Lo.** *What is freedom? Today? Two sisters, 11 and 17, living on the road, try to find out in this delicate comedy. (8/19/96)* **Secrets & Lies.** *Mike Leigh's actors, as always uniquely immersed in their roles, give smashing verity to this London drama of a buried past that's not really buried at all. (9/30/96)* **A Time to Kill.** *The trial of a black man in Mississippi for murdering the white rapists of his young daughter. Strong acting and directing almost overcome the too-tidy handling of the theme. (9/2/96)*—**SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

play from a novel by the well-known Teru Miyamoto. A young wife lives with her husband and infant son in a small apartment in Osaka. Happily, she thinks. One day her husband commits suicide. She doesn't understand why. The mystery haunts her. In the course of time she marries again, a man who lives in a fishing village. Her life seems to have resettled until she goes back to Osaka for a visit, and the mystery of her first husband's death envelops her again, even after she returns to her new home. She is now almost immobilized with incomprehension. Her present husband tells her that his fisherman father once spoke of the existence of a *maborosi*, an *ignis fatuus* that could lead men to destruction. This really explains nothing; still, the impossibility of explaining everything in life is apparently the film's theme.

The story is slender, but Kore-eda uses it merely as an armature for mood pieces, much as nineteenth-century composers used libretti as occasions for arias and duets and choruses and so on. In *Maborosi* the "arias" are visual—collaborations between the director and his wonderful cinematographer Masao Nakabori. I haven't seen such exquisite work in a Japanese film since the heyday of the great Kazuo Miyagawa, the cinematographer of *Rashomon* and *Sansho the Bailiff* and *The Ballad of Orin*.

Nakabori has no interest in the gorgeous. He concentrates on the articulation of place through light, often set in horizontal planes, making the frame seem very delicately striated. Always the color scheme is gentle. And always, as Kore-eda clearly desires, the elements in any shot are minimal. Nakabori underscores a contrast that others have used: the difference between the patent geometry of Japanese interiors—the explicit rectangles of windows and bare walls—and the curve and flow of human bodies. But there is no moment in *Maborosi* when we are not rewarded simply by looking.

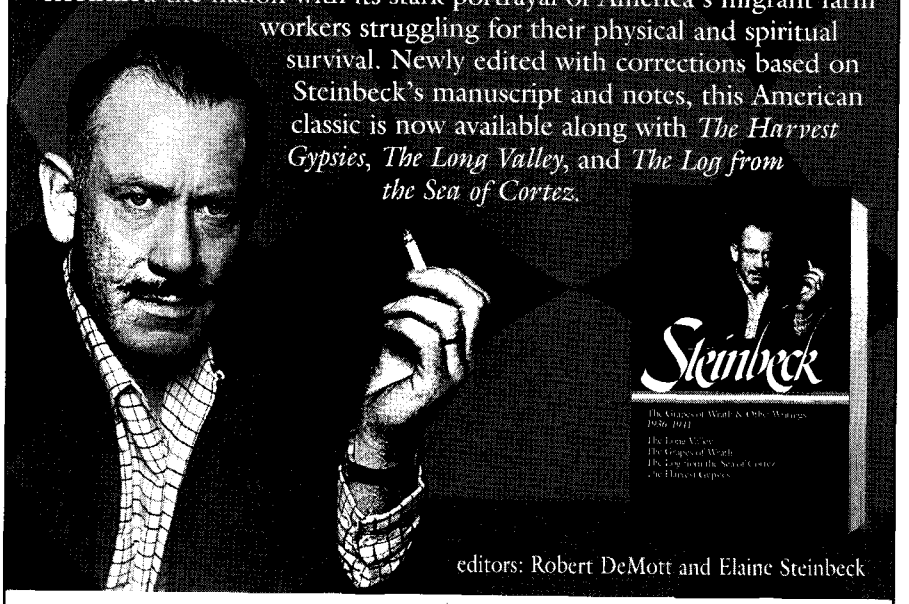
Toward the end the young woman is sitting in a small doorless shack, a bus stop on a country road. It's a medium long shot. The interior of the shack is dark, and it takes a moment before we see her within. The composition—the small shack, the large vistas behind it, the patch of darkness in the doorway that gradually reveals the woman—is exquisite.

Kore-eda works mostly in long shots, sometimes quite long. He rarely moves the camera. With Nakabori, he presents a gallery of visual meditations on the situations in which the young woman finds herself. His compositions neither illustrate nor dramatize: they transmute.

In any traditional view, there is no act-

The Grapes of Wrath—a classic restored

In 1939 John Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Grapes of Wrath* electrified the nation with its stark portrayal of America's migrant farm workers struggling for their physical and spiritual survival. Newly edited with corrections based on Steinbeck's manuscript and notes, this American classic is now available along with *The Harvest Gypsies*, *The Long Valley*, and *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*.



editors: Robert DeMott and Elaine Steinbeck

THE LIBRARY OF AMERICA

America's best writers deserve America's best editions

More than 90 volumes now available at better bookstores. Distributed by Penguin USA.

To order, or for a free catalog, call (212) 308-3360, or write: The Library of America, 14 E. 60th Street, N.Y. 10022.

3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Women's Freedom Network

"Rethinking Sexual Harassment"

Is the war on sexual harassment helping or hurting the cause of gender equality?

Is There a Better Way?

October 12-13, 1996

Doubletree Hotel Park Terrace, Washington, D.C.

Speakers scheduled to appear include:

Karen DeCrow, Esq.
Former President, National Organization for Women

Elizabeth Fox Genovese
Professor, Emory University

Kate Fillion
Author, Lip Service / Columnist, Saturday Night

Joanne Jacobs
Columnist, San Jose Mercury News

Eugene Volokh
UCLA School of Law

For registration information contact:
WFN at 1-800-575-3313, or (202) 885-6245

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing in the film. Most of the time the actors are used almost as balletic figures, slow-moving, in a terrain that itself seems concerned with their concerns. In a sense Kore-eda is a revolutionary director, not with blare and pyrotechnics but with the revision of our expectations. He asks us to look for rewards quite different from those of most other films, even very fine ones. And, quietly, he gratifies. •

Jed Perl on Art

Love, Etcetera

J. Carter Brown speaks in dulcet tones at the beginning of the audio tour for "Rings," the international loan show that he organized at the High Museum in Atlanta for the Summer Olympics. As he guides us by a Rodin, a Brancusi, an Indian miniature and a Flemish Madonna, this museum-world wheeler-dealer has a confidential, just-between-you-and-me demeanor. His theme here is Love, the first of the emotions that Brown has chosen, one for each of the five rings in the Olympic logo. The show, which goes on from Love to present 6,000 years of Anguish, Awe, Triumph and Joy, is Brown's first major curatorial effort since he resigned his post as director of the National Gallery in Washington in 1992, and he's lost none of the showman's flair that put him at the forefront of the blockbuster frenzy of the 1980s. Working for the Olympics, rather than in the context of a world-class museum, Brown is freed of even the pretense of scholarly probity, and the result is a show in which a lot of the art would soar, if only the curator weren't looking for the lowest common denominator.

"Rings: Five Passions in World Art" will go down as one of those summer '96 media events in which the packager did such a beautiful job of sealing up the product that the audience was relieved of any obligation to react. With NBC presenting prerecorded Olympic events as if they were live in prime time, and the political parties micromanaging their conflict-free conventions, J. Carter Brown has emerged as the museum man of the hour: a master of the prearranged emotion. He grasped the logic of Atlanta, where near the end of the show there had to be a Triumph that left you in a state of Joy. Of course nobody needed to go to Atlanta to know that just about anything can be turned into pop sentimentality; by now that's a very old story. Still, the seigneurial sheen that Brown brings to what is basically shameless pandering *is* unusual. Maybe this patrician Yankee felt that he could get away with "Rings" because he was working so far south of the Mason-Dixon line. Maybe after all those years at the National Gallery he's realized that, so long as funding is forthcoming, a culture czar is beyond the reach of criticism. Whatever the reason, with "Rings" the blockbuster goes bionic.

This is not to say that Brown doesn't have some good ideas. It's exciting to imagine putting a big non-museum-going audience in touch with the emotional high of masterpiece-level art. And, as for the wide range of cultures and periods that Brown has included, what avid museumgoer hasn't seen linkages and echoes between works of art done in farflung places and wanted to tell others about those connections? There are people who believe that such unexpected juxtapositions are bound to be impressionistic. This is an honorable view. But I do think that there's a special kind of excitement that comes with weaving old works together in new ways. That's what André Malraux did in the symphonic meditations on the history of art that he published in the decades after World War II. I love those careening volumes of Malraux's; his zigzags through time and space draw us into a mind so packed with impressions that he can leapfrog the usual categories and come up with a superior kind of sense.

When Brown, in an interview about "Rings," says that he means to present "a personal view," he's at least trying to convince us that he's set out to share some private intuitions with the Atlanta audience. Yet, even if Brown has been mulling over these juxtapositions for years, and somehow I doubt it, he's failed to consider that this art collage could be the hardest thing for his target audience—which he describes as "an audience that may not frequent art museums"—to comprehend.

Of course "Rings" isn't really meant for the inveterate museumgoer, but the irony is that only a fairly knowledgeable visitor will appreciate the curatorial clout and savvy that's involved. Brown turns up the heat at the High Museum with some astonishing loans, and there's no way that you're going to be wowed by the show unless you know how rarely Matisse's *Dance (II)* leaves Russia, or how hard it is to pry a huge El Greco off the walls of the Prado, or why the Taiwanese don't like to loan rare scroll paintings. To the extent that "Rings" really has a subject, it's about seeing what happens when masterworks are put together in unexpected ways, but Brown takes his prowess in obtaining international loans so much for granted that he can't even be bothered to explain what it is that he's managed to obtain.

The first section of "Rings," the Love phase of the story, includes the most revealing impression of intimacy in all of ancient art, the fourteenth-century B.C. Egyptian relief of *Pharaoh Akhenaten and Queen Nefertiti Playing with Their Daughters*, which is now in Berlin. I'd expect Brown to call special attention to this small, spectacular object, in which the children wrap their arms around their parents with such delicate force; but on the audio tour it's just an unnamed instance of "a family's love." The wall label reveals little more. (The catalog does contain additional commentary, but people don't go through a show reading the catalog.) If Brown really believes that visitors to "Rings" are interested in the universality of emotions, why doesn't he draw their attention to the pharaoh nuzzling his little daughter? Since most people have at least a vague (and not entirely mistaken) impression of the rigidity of Egyptian society, it's fairly easy to trigger a genuine shock of recognition when presenting such physical warmth in such an unexpected context. The formality of Ancient Egyptian art seems to be melting away right before your eyes. The sweetly curving rhythms of the Akhenaten relief come straight out of the sculptor's observation of intimate emotions, yet Brown, having bagged the goods, feels no obligation to explain them.

"Rings" includes quite a few brilliant individual choices. Rubens fits comfortably into the overall design of the show, because this Flemish titan understands the appeal of flat-out statements and uses a wonderfully nuanced presentation to add highlights and echoes to his big, booming emotions. His *Arch of Ferdinand* (1634), a preparatory oil study for a temporary monument, presents uplift with such loopy visual subtlety that we're happily carried away by the whirling grandiosity of all the ornamen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tal figures and decorative flourishes. The nineteenth-century German landscape painter Caspar David Friedrich is another terrific artist for "Rings," since he renders big amorphous emotions with such poetic exactness. And there's more that's outstanding. A tenth-century Chinese scroll, in which two distinguished public servants and close friends are seen bending toward each other and saying goodbye, has the startling credibility that we know from some of the quietest moments in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. And the immense Hawaiian temple figure in breadfruit wood, from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, does leave us awestruck, because it is simultaneously ferocious and serene.

What kept me going through "Rings" were the rarities that Brown had assembled, but I don't know that I've ever seen so much high-quality work in a show where questions of quality were so beside the point. This is a visual-arts experience in which the visuals are just markers along the way. Moving by a rather mediocre seventeenth-century Mexican crucifixion, Brown tells us: "When you're ready, continue past the physical anguish of the dying Christ into the next room." The images illustrate the theme: if that is Christ on the Cross, this must be Anguish. And considering all the unlikely juxtapositions—after the crucifixion, there's a small Rubens *Lamentation* and then a Bill Viola video installation—Brown does give the show a surprisingly persuasive flow. But, since the flow is based on the proposition that things can look completely different and still mean the same thing, it doesn't exactly encourage you to trust the evidence of your eyes. Brown went to Atlanta to turn people on, and he's so fixated with his new, emotionally charged approach to art education that he's ended up abandoning the basics. Color, line, form and space are pretty much irrelevant.

For long stretches of "Rings," the second-rate and third-rate work predominates; and this stuff gives the show its tawdry epic sweep. John Martin's nearly ten-foot-wide *Great Day of His Wrath* (1851-53), filed under Awe, is Hollywood prehistory. The Russian Ivan Konstantinovich Aivazovsky's *Wave* (1889), nearly seventeen feet wide, isn't even that. There are too many Baroque paintings of saints, some of which, like Hendrick Terbrugghen's *Saint Sebastian* (1625), are stylish and technically accomplished but in the one-world context don't amount to much more than high-culture pot boilers. And when you

ART SCENES *Galleries, Exhibits, and Events*

Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, 20 E. 79th St., NYC, 10021, 212-879-6606, Monday through Saturday, 9:30-5:30. *John Ruskin Watercolors and Drawings.* *Illustrious History: 1871-Present, the 125th Anniversary of the San Francisco Art Institute*. Exhibiting works by distinguished alumni and faculty. September 5 -28.

Private Art Dealers Association P.O. Box 872, Lenox Hill Station NYC, 10021, 212-741-7264. Not-for-profit membership organization comprised of over sixty Fine Art specialists. Appraisal Service for Charitable Donations and Probate Purposes. Membership directory available.

Center for Creative Photography The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 520-621-7968. Monday thru Friday, 11-5; Sunday, 12-5. *Crimes and Splendors: The Desert Cantos of Richard Misrach*, organized by The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. On view September 22 through December 1.

Robert Dance, Inc. 101 West 55th Street, NYC, 10019, 212-977-5612. *By appointment*. Old Master Paintings and Drawings; Drawings available by: Cavalier d'Arpino, Zuccaro, Piola, Solimena, Marchesi, Cibo, many others.

Swann Galleries 104 East 25th Street, NYC 212-254-4710. Monday through Friday, 10-6. AUCTIONS: September 26: *American Autographs from Private Collections including Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Presidents from Washington to John F. Kennedy, Revolutionary and Loyalist figures, both legendary and lesser-known.* October 1: *Photographs, 19th and 20th century including Le Gray panarama, rare daguerreotype of a cat, cartes-de-visites of James Gang, vintage prints by Stieglitz and others, and Contructivist photocollages of the Russian States Circus*. Please write or call for preview hours, quarterly newsletter with full auction schedule, and to purchase catalogues.

Forum Gallery 745 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street, NYC, 355-4545. Tuesday through Saturday, 10-5:30. *Mark Podwal: Jewish Days* features watercolors and drawings by Mark Podwal, whose work has often appeared in the op-ed page of *The New York Times*. Podwal juxtaposes the past and present to celebrate and commemorate the joys and traumas of Jewish history. Often amusing and always insightful, Podwal's images add new meaning and understanding to the mystical signs of the zodiac, Jewish holidays, rituals, and ceremonial objects. September 11 through October 5.

The Parks Gallery 106 Doña Luz, Taos, NM, 505-751-0343. Monday through Saturday, 10-5:50; Sunday, 11-4 Melissa Zink's Story Paintings, extraordinary oil glaze portraits of imagined dramatic personae, are enriched by the artist's mixed media "settings." Call or write for photos.

Art Scenes is a regular advertising service of *The New Republic* featuring art news and announcements. For further information or space reservations, please **contact** Jennifer Barrett at 202-331-7494. **Mail** your listing to: *Art Scenes*, *The New Republic*, 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Or **fax** the listing to 202-223-0566.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have Monet, what's the point of also including a vapid beach scene by an academic Impressionist like the Spaniard Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida? "Rings" asks too much of some artists, while others are presented at far less than their full strength in order to shoehorn them into the scheme. Ingres's gigantic *Napoleon Enthroned* (1806), which hangs near Rubens's *Arch of Ferdinand*, is hopeless, an ice-cold surface with none of the painter's invitingly ambiguous undercurrents. Great art is not necessarily emotionally direct. I would have thought that Brown understood that; if so, he's not sharing the secret with visitors to the Olympics.

"Rings" is aesthetic demagoguery, and so far as J. Carter Brown is concerned Atlanta is only the beginning. In discussing the show, Brown has said that he hopes to carry the concept to a "potential audience that lies *beyond* Atlanta and the Olympic Games." He may have the wherewithal. As the chairman of Ovation, Inc., a new fine arts TV network, and a senior adviser and consulting editor at Corbis, the corporation that Bill Gates has founded to create an international computer image library and produce art-related CD-ROMs, Brown can help shape the electronic universe where education and entertainment overlap. Apparently the stakes have become so high that art is practically beside the point. At the conclusion of "Rings," Matisse's *Dance (II)* is hanging on the wall and Mahler is coming through the headphones and Brown is intoning, "Interconnectedness ... rings ... passion. It's what makes us—all of us—human." When you're talking like this, paintings only get in the way. *Dance (II)* is an exhilarating fusion of opulence and simplicity, but Brown has gone Matisse one better: he's telling us about life. •

The Booby Trap

BY HELEN VENDLER

Great Books: My Adventures with Homer, Rousseau, Woolf, and Other Indestructible Writers of the Western World by David Denby

(Simon and Schuster, 492 pp., $30)

In an original solution to what he calls his "mid-life crisis," David Denby, the movie critic of *New York* magazine, decided in 1991, at the age of 48, to go back to Columbia and reread the Great Books that he had encountered thirty years before in the college's two famous courses, C.C., or Contemporary Civilization, and Lit Hum, or Literature Humanities. From the beginning, Denby seems to have had the idea of writing a book about his experience. He wanted, he says, not only "to find out what actually went on in classrooms" in these days of the culture wars, but also "to add my words to the debate from the ground up." He was eager to write "an adventure book ... and also a naïve book, an amateur's book—in other words, a folly."

Denby chose the right descriptions. His book is naïve, amateurish and a folly. The author's "adventures" among masterpieces suggest that one is more impermeable at the age of 48 than at the age of 18. Try as he may to suggest that he is growing and changing as he re-encounters the Great Books, his account suggests a man coming into the field with his mind made up. Take, for instance, his prefatory remarks about his "crisis":

> Like many others, I was jaded yet still hungry; I was cast into the modern state of living-in-the-media, a state of excitement needled with disgust. At the end of the century, the end (even!) of the millennium, the media threaten to take over altogether and push literature out of sight, and my disgust was tinged with intense emotions I couldn't quite pin down—nostalgia, regret, anger, even despair.... I sensed my identity had softened and merged into the atmosphere of representation.... My own memories were lapsing out into the fog of media life, the unlived life as spectator.

Since books, too, are instances of "representation," it's hard to see what good more representations (in printed form) might do for a man sick of spectatorship. And the millennial threats are overplayed. Not everybody is as overwhelmed as Denby seems to be by "the modern state of living-in-the-media," and he isn't the first knell-ringer of books. Anyway, it is unlikely that an evolutionary mechanism so advantageous as language is going to stop performing its usual operations with words (from puns to poems) any time soon. But let us follow the jaded yet hungry, excited but disgusted narrator into the Columbia classrooms.

Denby explains Columbia's famous required-of-all-students courses:

> The general reader need know only that C.C. grew out of Columbia's War Issues course offered during the First World War and was considered from the beginning a defense of Western civilization; and that Lit Hum (or Humanities A, as it was initially called) emerged in 1937 from a General Honors course developed by teacher and editor John Erskine over a period of years.

Denby grasps that at least one of these courses might be peculiar. I don't know if the Columbia archives would bear him out, but he avers that

> from the beginning, Lit Hum was intended to enshrine the literature of Christian Europe in a college increasingly populated by the children of Eastern or Southern European immigrants—the unwashed but not unwashable Jews and Italians who needed to be assimilated into the larger culture of the country.

Against this assertion, I can only say that in 1937 there were rather few of the great unwashed enrolled in Columbia College; and John Erskine, in putting together a fall semester of ancient Greek and Latin writers in his course, was hardly enshrining (with the exception of Augustine) the "literature of Christian Europe." It might more truly be said that he was enshrining Anglophilia. The second semester of Lit Hum included Dante and Goethe, but it also included Spinoza; and a fair number of the writers on the list of 1937 who might be said by Denby to belong to "Christian Europe" were also on another and more powerful list, Rome's Index of Forbidden Books: Machiavelli, Rabelais, Rousseau and Voltaire, among others.

By so conspicuously calling Europe "Christian Europe," Denby exhibits the muddled thinking that pervades his book. "Christianity" and "Europe" are far from simple concepts, and nobody, asked to cite some works from "the literature of Christian Europe," would be likely to mention *Tom Jones* or *Candide*. In fact, Lit Hum's spring list of 1937 is rather peculiarly unrepresentative of Christianity: "Dante" refers, of course, to the *Inferno* rather than the *Paradiso*; "Goethe" includes only Part I of *Faust* (no salvation there); the selection from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Molière includes *Tartuffe*, in which religious hypocrisy is satirized; Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* is robustly anticlerical and blasphemous; and the power politics of *Henry IV*, Parts I and II, hardly represent "Christian Europe" as, say, *The Winter's Tale*, with its resurrective image, might represent it. Thomas Aquinas is conspicuously absent, along with other theological writers from Bonaventure to Rolle. Even Milton, in the form of the required *Paradise Lost*, hardly represents European Christian orthodoxy. On the whole, if one entered as one of the unwashed, one would be wholeheartedly converted, at the end of Lit Hum, to a form of washedness that was notably skeptical.

In 1961-62, when Denby first sat through Lit Hum, not too much in the second semester had changed. The cheerful *Tom Jones* had been dropped, in those existentialist days, in favor of *Crime and Punishment*, and Machiavelli had disappeared. Bits of the New Testament had been added (no doubt because the students had become more secular—and more Jewish), as bits of the Hebrew Bible had been added in the first, "classical," semester. *Faust* now included (perhaps for the same reason) Part II. Shakespeare was much expanded: there was *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Tempest*.

By 1991, however, when Denby returned to the classroom for his mid-life tune-up, Rabelais, Cervantes, Spinoza, Swift, Voltaire, Dostoevsky and Part II of *Faust* had been scratched from the list in favor of Boccaccio, Descartes, Austen and Woolf. *Paradise Lost* is listed as "optional." Shakespeare is reduced to *King Lear* and a play of the instructor's choice. Instead of Woolf, the instructor can substitute another text. It is clear that the subterranean discontents of students or professors, along with cultural change, caused the alterations. In the first "classical" semester, a feeble propitiatory nod to the female presence in the student body appeared in the insertion of the Homeric "Hymn to Demeter" and selections from Sappho.

No doubt someone will write a revealing book on the history of these changes. But Denby is not much bothered by them. One selection of "Great Books" will represent "the literature of Christian Europe" as well as another. Yet if such books have the impact that he claims for them, it should matter whether a student reads Aquinas or Spinoza, Machiavelli or Boccaccio, Austen or Dostoevsky. Which picture of "Christian Europe" should the college aim to purvey? As long as he is in the company of a "Great Book," Denby seems not to care, though he sturdily resists Kant and Dante, and feels himself something of an enlightened modern crusader in so doing. More of that later.

So far I have neglected the second course, the one so curiously evolving from "War Issues." Known rather bizarrely as "Contemporary Civilization," it begins nevertheless with Thucydides and makes its sociopolitical way (in its present form) through Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, the Bible, Augustine (*The City of God*), Aquinas (politics and ethics), Christine de Pisan, Machiavelli, Calvin, Descartes, Galileo, Hobbes and Locke, progresses, in the spring term, to Rousseau, Hume, Kant, Madison, Smith, Hegel, Marx, Mill, Wollstonecraft, Darwin, Nietzsche and Freud. Then it closes with a flurry of choice: the instructor must select one book from a list containing Weber, Gramsci, Arendt, Lenin and Habermas, and one book from a list containing Beauvoir, MacKinnon, Rawls, Fanon, Malcolm X, West (Cornel), Foucault and some Supreme Court decisions. (The particular decisions are unspecified, but I don't doubt that they broach issues of gender or race.) The first list of elective readings exists to satisfy academic Marxists, on the faculty or among the students, and the second exists to satisfy feminists or black studies advocates. It is a sad falling-off from Machiavelli to MacKinnon, from Descartes to Malcolm X.

The list for C.C. is idea-driven. What have writers had to say about the good or the just or the desirable society? With its twenty-six authors (plus parts of the Bible), the course is a once-over-lightly: many of the texts (the *Republic*, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*) are not your ordinary coverable-in-a-week works. Indeed, my first emotion on beginning Denby's book was an incredulous sympathy for the teachers that have to frog-march freshmen or sophomores through these dense texts (or through dense selections from them). Denby quotes a now-departed instructor who thought that there was too much too fast. Not Denby. He is sure that "the struggle to read seriously, the hundred hours or so of seminar discussion, would necessarily leave their mark on the student." But what mark, exactly? And is this the best way to spend those hundred hours?

One could envisage a different way to introduce students to the European past, a way that would not be driven solely by the idea of a good society, but by several ideas of how to live both the public life and the private life. Students might read the *Symposium* or the *Satyricon* or the *Ars Amatoria*. Dialogues on love and satires on social practice might be considered as instructive as treatises on politics and ethics. Along with Machiavelli, one might read Pascal, so that not only government but also introspection might count as an index of "Western civilization." It's a sad reduction of "Western thought" to confine it to thoughts on politics and ethics. The philosophical texts in C.C. are drawn almost entirely from political philosophy and ethics, scanting almost entirely the other branches of philosophical thought—aesthetics, metaphysics, epistemology, logic, the philosophy of science. Wittgenstein is conspicuously absent.

Denby provides three reading lists (1937, 1961, 1991) for Lit Hum, but he does not offer any earlier lists of C.C. since its "War Issues" incarnation, remarking only that C.C. "has changed the nature of its reading lists so radically that printing syllabi from seventy or fifty years ago would serve little purpose." There must be a story there. Denby does not seem to realize that a history of former radical change at Columbia supports precisely the argument of those who would now once again alter "the canon." Perhaps the designers of C.C., inventing a course under the pressure of war, felt that one could interest students (or their teachers) only in political and ethical matters, and gave up on the other branches of philosophy; but the result of C.C. (as I have seen it) is that most Columbia graduates think of "ideas" as a word referring to political or ethical concepts rather than to aesthetic or metaphysical ones.

Political life, in such a course, is deemed "realer" than private life or aesthetic life. Ideas about society and the state are presented as more important than ideas about what Yeats called "making [one's] soul." Even in Lit Hum, the supposedly literary course, the spring books chosen (except those by women authors) are ones heavy on "ideas" in the Columbia sense: the *Confessions*, Montaigne, *King Lear*, *Paradise Lost*, Descartes, Goethe. (Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was Denby's instructor's choice in the "free" week, though other instructors chose Dostoevsky or Mann or Gide or Borges, for thematic or theoretical reasons that one can easily deduce.) Think what a different sense of Western civilization students would have if the literature list offered the *Metamorphoses*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, Villon, Ariosto, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Boswell's Johnson, Keats, Beckett, Nabokov. What a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

send-up of solemn "ideas" as the foundation of discussion of Western culture such a course would be! And such a list would be no less representative of "the Western mind" than Lit Hum's current smorgasbord.

Denby thinks that he is boldly taking part in the culture wars by defending the existence of courses such as C.C. and Lit Hum. But since he never engages with (or even seems to notice) the principles behind Columbia's choice of books from the Western canon, he cannot really touch the central objections to such courses: that an agenda is present, but it is not enunciated; that the books are said to be "great" but the criteria for "greatness" (beyond longevity alone) are assumed rather than held up for inspection and imperceptibly mutate from generation to generation. Instead Denby blusters and blunders from course to course, sampling the teaching of various instructors and giving (rather sparsely) instances of the disheartening student "discussions" of the texts.

And, most of all, chummily judging the works he reads, as if they were the movies of the week up for review. Dante, for instance. Denby has a hard time with Dante. He begins by giving samples of pseudonymous student comments on Dante. "Why is he so obsessed with these people? Who is he to come up with these tortures?" says one. "There are mosques in hell. Dante is Turk-bashing," says another, offering "to put Dante himself in the circle reserved for bigots and racists." And Denby feels pretty much the same way:

> Yes, [the *Inferno*] was fantasy and representation, not real life, but I could not rid myself of the notion that Dante had entered into complicity with torture. In some way, he believed in torture; he justified it. In life, the torturer's lust for control yields to mortality; the victim dies. Here the torment goes on forever. A man would be tormented eternally for "barratry"—for graft.... Imagine! A New York pol caught in a parking-ticket scam buried in excrement forever!

In vain do the instructors attempt to form, in Denby as well as in the undergraduates, a more complicated attitude. "Everybody's a Christian, guys. It's not a sermon ... it's a Christian poem written for a Christian audience in a Christian framework," says Professor Shapiro. "You've got to try to understand before you judge," says Professor Tayler. They are right to warn against facile transpositions from one age to another, from a religious culture to a secular culture. Yet such arguments don't go to the heart of the matter. In literature, one earns one's place by writing memorably, not by expressing agreeable attitudes that will wear as well in 1991 as in 1300, or that can be forgiven by an "understanding" reader.

And this brings up the question of teaching poetry in translation (Allen Mandelbaum's translation of Dante, in this case). The single string in Dante's bow, finally, is his use of the Italian language. His imagination is celebrated too, but we wouldn't remember his imaginative acts unless they were embodied in his alternately severe and voluptuous Italian. It is no wonder undergraduates don't kindle to Dante, since he has been stripped of his fundamental persuasive power. The poor students, and their poor middle-aged chronicler, are not really reading Dante. I do not expect them to master the Italian of fourteenth-century Florence. But I do expect them to grasp that there is a difference and a loss, and that their judicial pronouncements—whatever satisfaction they may provide—have no aesthetic foundation.

Denby gestures pathetically at this truth when Professor Shapiro asks an Italian-speaking student to read aloud, in Italian, the opening lines of the *Inferno*. Denby absurdly says, quoting the first twelve lines, that "I would ask the reader to read the lines aloud, even if, like me, he doesn't speak a word of Italian.... So strong was the sound of Dante's poetry that it made me feel I wasn't reading the poem at all." Poetry is thus reduced to what Denby calls "metrics" and "sound"—indispensable enough if you understand their function with respect to what is being said, but hardly useful when they stand alone, as unintelligible as Iroquois.

It is no surprise that Virgil, in Robert Fitzgerald's translation, suffers much the same fate. Encountering the *Aeneid* makes even Denby sympathize (rather ungrammatically) with "opponents of the canon":

> The *Aeneid* is the epitome of what opponents of the canon hate: a self-empowering myth of origins, a celebration of empire.... No doubt about it—the poem asserts the centrality of Rome in such a way that renders [sic] other people besides the Greek-Trojan-Roman line marginal.... dull Aeneas, in my mind, came to embody the culture of the West itself, marching grimly but purposefully into the future. He brought his father and son, but he left his women behind.

And the instructors cannot change Denby's mind. In vain does Shapiro argue that "Virgil subverted the glorification of empire at every turn," and Tayler that this is a poem that emphasizes loss. Denby concludes in a fashion that he visibly considers high-minded:

> No wonder people who had been reading the poem for years said they did not understand it. Virgil himself may not have understood it.... That Virgil's attitudes were "wrong" should not bother anyone. That his poem is hurt as art by those attitudes is something to grieve over and deplore.

Why do I find the spectacle of *New York*'s movie critic "grieving over" and "deploring" Virgil's damaged art so irresistibly comic? Why does his weighty judgment that Virgil himself "may not have understood" his own poem seem, to say the least, like something out of Molière? Denby seems not to understand that the judgment of a literary work is a judgment of the fitness of the style to the subject, manner to matter, and that it cannot be made anachronistically nor (with any confidence) through translation. Nor does he understand that the artist's objective is to do something that hasn't been done before, and to do it in an original achievement of style. If he or she succeeds, that's it: the product is as unquarrelable-with as a lake or a mountain. It has become, through the admiration of subsequent writers, a part of the landscape of culture.

It makes no sense to say, on the grounds of morals, or taste, or women's rights, or whatever, that a literary masterwork should have been differently conceived or differently executed. Of course, one can argue (as critics of "Great Books" courses sometimes do) that students should not be forced to read morally "deplorable" or "elitist" books in a required course in college; that a college course, if it is to be required, should please contemporary moral taste. (That taste is defined, of course, by the critics themselves.) This is where Columbia's Lit Hum becomes muddled in its principles. It obviously selects literary works on the basis of their suitability for ethical or political argument, as though artists were valuable for making arguments, for their theological or moral or political opinions. Columbia feels no qualms about teaching literary works blithely in translation and detached from the thought of their time. It uses such works (as the title "Contemporary Civilization" testifies) not to illuminate, say, the Middle Ages, but to take up, say, "war issues" in 1917. The highly content-oriented principle behind the choice of texts in both

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

courses directs students forcibly toward ethical judgment, unclouded by literary or imaginative considerations. Perhaps it does students no harm to conduct bull-sessions about colonialism in class; but should Conrad be sacrificed to such an aim?

Denby really goes to town on Conrad. He refuses—nobly, he thinks—the view that *Heart of Darkness* endorses the colonial ambitions of the British Empire. He asks whether "thousands of European and American readers may not have become *nauseated* by colonialism after reading *Heart of Darkness*?" He appears not to see the reality of his position, that the politically incorrect does not differ essentially from the politically correct: both are moral positions taken with respect to art. The politically correct think that the work is pro-colonial, and therefore has a bad effect on the reader; Denby thinks that it is anti-colonial, and therefore has a good effect on the reader. He cannot see what the two views have in common, and their common irrelevance. Treating fictions as moral pep-pills or moral emetics is repugnant to anyone who realizes the complex psychological and formal motives of a work of art. The representations in fiction are never driven by mimesis alone.

Denby contests Chinua Achebe's protest against *Heart of Darkness*—Achebe maintains that "'Conrad's picture of the people of the Congo seems grossly inadequate.'" Denby argues that "no act of consciousness can ever be absolutely complete," that "Conrad did not offer *Heart of Darkness* as 'a picture of the people of the Congo' any more than Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, set in a Nigerian village, purports to be a rounded picture of the British overlords." And yet Denby allows that he has been "changed by the debate in class," that he has seen the relevance of a political reading of the novel. As a convert, he now attacks former critical methods (as he complacently understands them): "To maintain that this book is not embedded in the world—to treat it innocently, as earlier academic critics did, as a garden of symbols, or as a quest for the Grail or the Father, or whatnot—is itself to diminish Conrad's achievement." God knows what Denby has been reading, since he cites no names for these "earlier academic critics." But the mediocrity of criticism has not ceased just because one has substituted political readings for Freudian readings or archetypal readings. Denby's faith in "embeddedness" is no less partial and uncomprehending than someone else's faith in mythological or psychoanalytic subtexts.

I do not want to blame Denby alone for this. He is imbibing Columbia's tendency with literary texts, which is to fasten on the political and the moral over the erotic or aesthetic or epistemological; and such an emphasis is a standing invitation to correctness or incorrectness, since it steers discussion, willy-nilly, toward currently agitated political and moral questions. In itself, this agenda of instruction, though it would not be my choice of a "Great Books" course, cannot be said to cause actual harm. Both of these courses have proved enlightening and broadening to many generations of Columbia students. But something has changed for the worse, I suspect. Were Columbia's students in the past—or their instructors—likely to make anachronistic and patronizing judgments on Virgil or Dante or Conrad, stemming from concerns of the present? I suspect that former generations were invited to immerse themselves in the mentality of the past without the presence of this sort of invidious judgment. But now they can all hold themselves contentedly superior to the "Turk-bashing" Dante.

I would hate to have my own teaching represented by notes taken by someone like Denby, so I haven't quoted much from his account of his instructors. But this is what he represents Professor Shapiro (whom Denby calls "the Coach") as saying at the beginning of the Conrad class:

> I don't want to say that this is a work that teaches desperation ... or that the evil is something we can't deal with. In some ways, the world we live in is not as dark as Conrad's; in some ways darker. This is not a one-way slide to the apocalypse that we are witnessing. We ourselves have the ability now to recognize and even to fix and change our society even as literature reflects, embodies, and serves as an agent of change.

Now, this sermon-mode (complete with its hortatory "we") is much more grand than Denby's earlier account of how the Coach began the Conrad class:

> "Who here comes from a savage race?" the Coach shouted at his students.
>
> "We all come from Africa," said the one African-American in the class....
>
> Shapiro smiled. It was not, I thought, exactly the answer he was looking for, but it was a good answer. Then he was off again. "Are you natural?" he roared at a woman sitting quietly near him at the end of the table. "What are the constraints for you? What are the rivets? Why are you here getting civilized, reading Lit Hum?"

Be prepared for life's little contingencies, with...

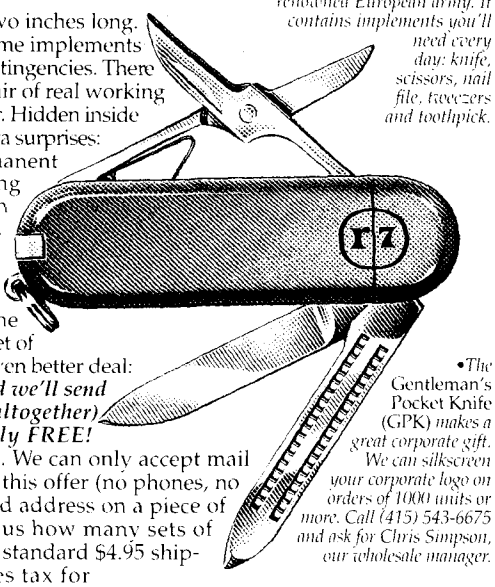
Gentleman's Pocket Knife (GPK)

3 (Yes, three!) for only $14.95*

***But read this ad for an even better deal!**

•*The GPK is fashioned after the officers knife of a renowned European army. It contains implements you'll need every day: knife, scissors, nail file, tweezers and toothpick.*

This nifty little knife is just over two inches long. Yet, in its small body it carries some implements that'll come in handy in life's little contingencies. There is the knife blade, of course; then a pair of real working scissors; and a handy nail file/groomer. Hidden inside (just pull them out!) are a couple of extra surprises: a small pair of tweezers and a permanent "ivory" toothpick. The whole thing comes with a little ring so that you can put the *GPK* on your key chain.



We import these knives as a sales promotion and in very large quantities. That's why we are able to bring you this very handy accessory at the astonishing price of just $14.95 for a set of 3 (yes, three!) *GPKs*. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two sets (6 GPKs) for $29.90 and we'll send you a third set (making it 9 GPKs altogether) with our compliments—absolutely FREE!***

•*The Gentleman's Pocket Knife (GPK) makes a great corporate gift. We can silkscreen your corporate logo on orders of 1000 units or more. Call (415) 543-6675 and ask for Chris Simpson, our wholesale manager.*

This is an offer you can't refuse. We can only accept mail orders, accompanied by check with this offer (no phones, no charge). Please write your name and address on a piece of paper, also write **Code C361.** Tell us how many sets of (3) *GPKs* you want and include our standard $4.95 shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for California delivery). You have 30-day return privilege, in the unlikely case that you won't be fully pleased! We do not refund postage. Take advantage of this unique sales promotion offer. You are getting a great deal and you'll be delighted. Mail to:

since 1967

haverhills®

185 Berry St., San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Denby's rendition, Shapiro doesn't sound any too civilized himself with his shouting and roaring. (The words may be the voluble Denby's attempt to jazz up the threateningly dull prospect of retailing what goes on in a college course.) But whether Shapiro is doing his pulpit-act or his intimidation-act, none of what he is reported to have said has anything to do with bringing students to understand the two fundamental gestures of literature, what Stevens called "the poetry of the idea" and "the poetry of the words"—that is, how Conrad turned what might have been a conventional travelogue into an imaginatively powerful fiction, and what discourses he had to mobilize (or to invent) to do so. Seeing the Columbia course use Dante and Conrad as moral examples is rather like seeing someone using a piece of embroidery for a dishrag with no acknowledgment of the difference between handwoven silk and a kitchen towel. It is true that some of the instructors struggle against the morally judgmental tide (Professors Tayler and Van Zuylen, for instance, the one emphasizing architectonics, the other "the resurrection of life through art"), but it's hard to work against the emphasis of the selection, which has been designed to provoke students into socio-politico-moral position-taking.

To come, then, to the other course, the more overtly philosophical Contemporary Civilization. Does it lend itself better to the emphasis on "ideas" on which the two courses are predicated? Does Denby learn anything as he gives the course a second try? He has a lot of trouble with these texts and has to struggle not to fall asleep: there's less human interest here. But human interest gets dragged in anyway. Hegelian dialectic makes one student suggest that "the Holocaust was the Fortunate Fall. It *drove* the founding of Israel." The instructor rushes in to say that "you can make the Hegelian argument that the Holocaust can be read dialectically.... But this is not a justification *for* the Holocaust." And Denby is off and running:

> His clarification only introduced greater contention. Several students voiced their dismay, and I snarled to myself that I lacked the ingenuity to read the Holocaust dialectically as the necessary spur to Israel's creation.... What did Hegel mean by freedom anyway? ... many of us would be loath to nominate Prussia in 1815, with its censorship, its lack of representative bodies, as our ideal of freedom. Indeed, if Prussia was Hegel's ideal, he may well have approved, despite his dismissal of the morality of the East, the paternalistic and authoritarian Singapore.

Poor Hegel. Did he ask to have the Holocaust and—God save the mark—Singapore brought into the discussion? The relentless bringing of everything past into everything present so falsifies the contribution to thought made by successive philosophical systems that students can hardly be made to realize the explanatory and cognitive value of such systems.

Denby likes to bring everything back to himself. If he reads Hegel on human beings constructing each other as persons by mutual recognition, the passage is attached to Denby's being mugged in the subway. And it is converted, to boot, into *High Noon*:

> I had not looked the two young men in the eyes, literally refusing them "recognition." The reason, as I said earlier, was both contempt and fear: You do not eyeball someone holding a gun on you.... In Hegel's fiction, the men who met at high noon had no past; they met, so to speak, as equals. The two men who faced me were probably descendants of actual slaves, and while one can't forget that, the fact doesn't, in itself, change the nature of the encounter. The difference between us was one of class. If the two young men had held up a black man in a suit on his way to work, the dynamics of the situation would have been the same.

I'd say the "difference between" Denby and the muggers was first and foremost one of criminality. To say it was one of class is to stigmatize all blacks in poverty, most of whom do not end up as muggers.

When Denby can't naturalize a philosophical doctrine with such a human interest vignette, he becomes fretfully cross. Though his instructor energetically expounds Kant's interest in epistemology and in a moral a priori, such things leave Denby cold. They don't have enough to do with real life: "Was it possible? Was it sane? To derive an ethics purely from reason and will; to compose a guide to action elaborated without the pressures that every human actor feels, a rumble of indigestion, a mood?" And wasn't Kant's experience awfully narrow compared with, hey, Denby's? "Manuel [a student] obviously had a point about parochialism. A lifelong bachelor, Kant had never gone farther than five miles from the small city of Königsberg.... Wasn't there something provincial, limited, repressed, perhaps privileged in his conception of the moral life?... I agreed with the students."

As for thinking, with Kant, that an act committed from inclination cannot properly be called an act of genuine moral worth, that morality resides in the fulfillment of duty—why, Denby can scarcely contain his scorn: "The passage has its loony and comical side, an excruciating pathos. It's almost as if, for Kant, enjoyment and spontaneity tainted virtue, and wretchedness and willed propriety sanctified it. Great noble booby!" But "wretchedness and willed propriety" are not at issue in Kant. Kant's aim for

Liberal Arts

After reading More's Utopia *again.*

That year there were two of us.
Long-distance firsts. At swimming, *zweiter*
Klasse on the liquid shelf
Ribboned by the glassy daze
The Wannsee made from sun upon
A rose, retiring shoulderblade.
We sat in the abandoned library
At a table one foot thick
With nothing on the ancient floor.
Someone read to others out of
Earshot homilies that had
No past, or nodded to no written
World, intentionally present
Tense, and good, and temporary
Although the future drove like bells
In afternoon admonishments
From autumn's discontented suite.
The days hung low. The woodwork waited.
Sunlight seemed life's first attack
Of exaltation, or politics,
Perhaps, embraced those indecisions
Out of which we carved our coming selves.
There in that sophisticated
Chaos with our unsuspecting
Lips upon the wave, our eyes on books,
Our hands relentless, inefficient,
Artificial as philosophy,
All sciences explosive in the vein
Wherein you looked at me, and dove,
The mountains stood along in all their shade.

Mary Kinzie

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human beings is happiness consonant with right conduct. Duty is a debt; it is not a "propriety," like the right fork. The booby here is not Kant.

And Denby is a patronizing booby, too, "judiciously" assessing what Kant, or Dante, or any other thinker or writer who has the misfortune to fall into his hands, has to offer. He seems to think that he is by this means asserting himself as an adult. Kids may have to swallow it whole; hell, he swallowed it whole the first time around; but this time he's not going to be buffaloed into any grovelling submission. No, sir: "Extending piety to classics that one didn't respond to was an academic vice, and I had to avoid it. I would read for enjoyment and instruction, and when bored, I would say so." And when he thought that Kant was a great noble booby, he would say that, too.

And he would be fair, too. He would not let himself off the moral hook. Did he treat those muggers right? And what about his mother? You didn't think he'd leave *her* out, did you? "Unlike Regan and Goneril," he writes in his chapter on *King Lear*, "I did my parent no great harm—I took care of her in the slightly distant but steady way that wary only sons take care of mothers—but I was often in a rage." And what do you know, he becomes a veritable Kantian booby, full of wretchedness and willed propriety, as he does his duty: "No matter, I told myself at the time. The thing required in grown-up sons was duty. What you felt was beside the point. You had obligations, and you had to fulfill them." Are we to believe that Denby has undergone a Kantian conversion? And if so, why was there no sign of it forty pages earlier, not even a repentant parenthesis?

Well, this book will give no aid or comfort to anyone on either side of the culture wars. How does one defend courses in the "Great Books," if they produce in their students (and no doubt in some instructors) mindless attacks on serious writers of the past? And why attack them, since substituting another socio-political set of books—more modern, more representative of marginalized groups, more critical of "Western Culture"—only perpetuates the old bad habit of ignoring the difference between a sermon and a novel, an idea and a painting? One can answer wearily that education has to start somewhere, and it hardly matters where: American students entering university have read practically nothing, so anything will help to advance them to a next level of consciousness. And this is not done in a single term, or by a single course, or even by courses alone. If the student graduating from college has a more nuanced set of intellectual responses than an equally intelligent student of the same age who has not been to college, then all the conversations and the courses and the extra-curricular activities have had a cumulatively desirable effect. In that hope, most teachers teach.

As for morals themselves, they are not acquired in college courses. They are acquired in childhood and taught by example. Courses in "moral reasoning" (as Harvard calls its set of Core Courses on philosophical, mostly ethical, concepts) may sharpen one's sense of the rationality and the logic proper to informed moral discussion, but they don't make one a better spouse or father or friend or citizen. To think that moral betterment can be the result of a required course in which students hash over lightweight arguments on complex books (one per week, more or less); to confuse moral instruction (or mutual moral hectoring) on fashionable contemporary issues with the pursuit of learning or the understanding of literature; to throw a week of Dante in translation at students who have not the faintest notion of the Middle Ages or Christian doctrine—all this is not to extend "Western civilization," but to travesty it.

And our hero? He concludes that "the courses in the Western classics force us to ask all those questions about self and society we no longer address without embarrassment—the questions our media-trained habits of irony have tricked us out of asking." Odd, Swift's "habits of irony" never tricked him out of asking such questions. Nor Montaigne's. Nor Cervantes's. Of course, they lived and thought before we were, every last one of us, media-trained. But the important point is that irony—and self-irony above all—is the first requisite of the educated mind. And Denby, on the evidence of his book, has not yet acquired it.

In his conclusion, with a certain magniloquence, he distributes points to "the left" and "the right":

> To the left, I would say that reading the canon in the 1990's is unlikely to turn anyone into a chauvinist or an imperialist.... People who deny the power of aesthetic experience or the possibility of disinterested judgment may well have cynical or careerist reasons for doing so.
>
> And to the right, I would say that however instructive the great works might be in building the moral character of the nation's citizens, the books were more likely, in the initial brush, to mean something idiosyncratic and personal.... I agree with William Bennett and other traditionalists to this extent: Men and women educated in the Western tradition will have the best possible shot at the daunting task of reinventing morality and community in a republic now badly tattered by fear and mistrust.

As Denby's rhetoric in this passage rises to its climax, I could only think in amazement about the new millenarian importance of college reading lists: Lit Hum and C.C. now have to do what Milton thought only the Incarnation could do—repair the fall of our first parents. As Denby gravely proclaims the republic to be "badly tattered," we are to think that his sovereign judgment has been upheld by the Great Books that he has studied so deeply: "They offer the most direct representation of the possibilities of civil existence and the disaster of its dissolution." Isn't it strange that someone could write this way after reading Montaigne?

And the mid-life crisis? Since the arguments and the opinions expressed are too coarse and too slipshod to be taken

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SOFTWARE

Examine Every Election 1789-1992 On Your PC
Display 1000s of Color Maps and Charts
Covers All State and National Results
Used By Major Universities and Colleges
Free Update After 1996 Election
Explore 1996 Electoral Strategy
$29.95 To Order Call 1-608-845-2332
or Email Your Request to ELECSOFT@EXECPC.COM
ELECTORAL SOFTWARE, Box 930271, Madison WI 53593-0271

PERCUSSION JAZZ PROJECT 1
PRE-RELEASE ALBUM AVAILABLE
Intelligent music, no cacophony,
no plagiarism, no generic solos,
no clichés, no musical babble.
Call (310) 271-4770

bibliofind™
The Internet's largest inventory of old, used and rare books.
Search titles of hundreds of antiquarian booksellers with a single (free) query
http://www.bibliofind.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seriously, one can perhaps read Denby's book as the autobiography of a tired man wanting a break from the movies. The account is framed as a conversion narrative. He was weak but now he is strong. Here is a part of Denby's peroration on the personal dimension of his adventures:

> I was exposing myself to something greater than my life, stronger than my life—but also exposing my *life*—and the books called back things that I had forgotten or been afraid to face, and so I knew that I had sinned in the way Augustine said we all sinned and that I had not always served my mad and needy mother well in her final years.... I was discovering an edge, talking more and more in class, even competing with the teachers.... In truth, by the end, I had grown stronger. Not empowered in the social way that critics of the canon meant, but personally stronger.... I had recovered a good part of myself.... I did not feel desolate at the end of the year.

If we believe him, then the books and the teachers and the classrooms worked their therapeutic magic even without his understanding how they did it. But I would bet that the result would have been the same with four entirely different sets of absorbing books. There would have been the same feeling of intellectual refreshment, of having spent exciting time with interesting minds, of having been talked to (or roared at) by committed and intelligent teachers. And that makes the whole question of the "Great Books" moot, doesn't it?

HELEN VENDLER is Porter University Professor at Harvard. She has recently published *The Given and the Made* and *The Breaking of Style* (Harvard University Press).

Modernism to Madness

BY JAROSLAW ANDERS

Insatiability
by Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz
translated by Louis Iribarne

(Northwestern University Press, 534 pp., $40)

At the beginning of this mad, surreal Bildungsroman, first published in 1927 in Poland, a young Polish gentleman named Genezip Kapen, a sensitive high-school graduate and the son of a brewer in the Carpathian region, looks into the starlit sky and is seized by a sense of cosmic melancholy: "Eternity was as nothing compared to the monstrous infinitude of time within infinite space and the heavenly bodies inhabiting it. What to make of the thing? It was beyond imagining and yet impressed itself on the mind with absolute ontological necessity...." As his aloof, tyrannical father lies dying, Genezip senses "something painfully sweet in this sensation of loneliness," and he sets out on a frenzied, sexual and philosophical quest of self-discovery. He runs away from his father's bedside and engages in a series of heated debates on art, love, being, science, theosophy and religion with an assortment of characters including a composer of cacophonous music, an avant-garde writer, a professor of symbolic logic and an expropriated aristocrat turned neo-Catholic philosopher. He is briefly seduced by the composer, but he ends the night in the arms of the mysterious and alluring Princess Irina, who is much advanced in years.

The erotic and the philosophical freely intermingle in the novel, and endless intellectualizing seems the favorite form of foreplay for most of the book's characters. In Irina's bed, Genezip muses: "The property of arbitrariness is immediately posited for every animate creature: it is an elementary fact of existence; under certain circumstances resistance engenders a feeling of limitation and relative necessity, whereas absolute necessity, because of the abstract elimination that occurs at the periphery of Particular Being or of living creatures in general, is *necessarily* a fiction." Young Zip, as he is also called, is growing up fast. In the course of the book's many pages we see him humiliated and rejected by Irina, joining a military school, reconciled with Irina, worshiping another fiendish sadistic woman and murdering her gay chaperone, taking part in an aborted coup and finally marrying an angelic beauty, whom he strangles on their wedding night.

In the meantime, the whole world is imploding around Genezip and his companions. Western Europe is ruled by an array of "soft" communist or fascist regimes that manage to keep their populations complacent and materially satiated through superior labor organization, though the word is out that "the white man had ceased to believe in the myth of infinite progress and now saw the wall of obstruction in himself and not in nature." There is a hyperreactionary "White" revolution going on in Russia, while from the Far East a "living wall" of Chinese is approaching with the intention of interbreeding with the Europeans and starting a new era in the history of humanity.

In the middle, as always, lies Poland, governed by General Kotzmolochowicz, its enigmatic dictator, and a shadowy Syndicate for National Salvation. Constantly allying itself and fighting with all its neighbors, the country is "absolutely unswerving in its heroic defense of the idea of the nation" and determined "to be a bastion, a role which in her torpor she gladly assumed." Alas, the country's elites fall prey to a drug-induced New Age religion of Murti Bing that preaches the Mystery of Panexistence, Maximal Oneness and Duo-Unity. At the decisive historical moment the general, moved by a sudden humanitarian impulse, surrenders his invincible army to the Chinese and is respectfully beheaded by the enemy. At the end of the story Genezip, "by now a consummate lunatic, a mild automaton," is forced to marry a beautiful Chinese princess and become a faithful servant of his new masters.

This bizarre book is set in a fantastic present, and it might as well be the 1990s in the costumes of the interwar Poland. An innocent reader could be persuaded that he is reading a wordy, overdone, sometimes delightful parody of a generic Central European Novel, dense with murky eroticism, abstract cerebrations and an almost comforting premonition of the impending end of history. Even the character of Kotzmolochowicz, a stable boy turned Maximum Leader and "the most unpredictable demon from among the intrepid souls still roaming about on the vanishing horizon of individualism," might be read as a portrait of Marshall Jozef Pilsudski, Poland's interwar leader, and a more contemporary version of the Polish man of providence Lech Walesa. His genius, it seems, consists mainly of the fact that he has absolutely no clue about anything that happens around him, and so his erratic decisions befuddle his allies and enemies alike.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Insatiability, however, is not a pastiche or a parody. It is the real thing and one of the classics of European modernism. Its author, Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, a son of a prominent Polish art critic, is usually mentioned together with the two other literary innovators of his time, Bruno Schulz and Witold Gombrowicz. Something like a literary cult has grown up around the "Three Madmen," as Gombrowicz used to call them. It is tempting to treat them almost as a single phenomenon. Together they thoroughly revolutionized the literary sensibility of their country after World War I and helped to place Poland on the literary map of the modern world; and they displayed striking similarities in their lives as well as their art. All three grappled with serious personal problems about their family backgrounds and their disquieting sexual longings. They desired friendship and recognition, but they lived their lives in mostly self-imposed isolation. They were all obsessed with the question of form in art and the philosophical aspects of human relationships.

Still, they are not quite as monolithic as critics and historians make them seem. Each tried to resolve their common dilemmas in a radically different way, and each occupies a different place in the history of modern letters. Schulz, probably the most gifted prose writer of them all, still dazzles with his language and his imagination; he transformed the world of the Jewish Galician town of Drohobycz into an enchanted, mythical domain. Gombrowicz still fascinates with his dreamlike dramas and the originality of his concepts, which were expressed most fully in the semi-essayistic volumes of his *Diary*. It is Witkiewicz, the oldest of the trio, who still baffles interpreters of his writing and his life. Was he a "metaphysical dandy" (Gombrowicz's term) and an epigone of nineteenth-century decadence, a forerunner of today's radical irony? Or was he, like the hero of this novel, a lunatic slowly sinking into incoherence?

Born in 1885 in Warsaw, Witkiewicz soon moved with his parents to the Carpathian village of Zakopane, which at the turn of the century was becoming a colony of Polish artists and intellectuals from nearby Krakow. His father, who, among his many pursuits, translated Tolstoy into the local dialect and invented an architectural style of wooden chalets inspired by peasant huts of the Carpathian mountain folk, educated his son at home. The young man grew up in the intense climate of the turn-of-the-century bohemian life, soaking up arcane philosophical debates and what he called the "demonic" atmosphere of the entrancing mountainous countryside. Later he traveled to Italy, Germany and France and studied at the Academy of Fine Art in Krakow. He lived through a tempestuous romance with a famous actress and the suicide of another great love. Distressed and on the brink of insanity he joined his friend, the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, on an expedition to Australia and New Guinea. They quarreled, allegedly about the interpretation of ethnographic data, and with the outbreak of World War I Witkiewicz sailed to St. Petersburg, where he joined the tsarist army as an officer in an elite infantry regiment.

In Russia he discovered his two lifelong passions: philosophy and hallucinatory drugs. Records indicate that he was fearless in battle (he received the Order of St. Anne for his courage) and that he was kind to his soldiers, who with the outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 elected him their commissar. At this point, however, he decided to come home. He sneaked back to Poland and settled in Zakopane. He wrote philosophical tracts, plays and novels; he painted and experimented with drugs (he can be credited with the invention of "psychedelic" art); and he participated in several avant-garde movements. He quickly gained notoriety, but a literary reputation was slow in coming.

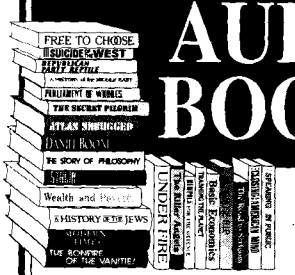
Reconstituted after World War I as an independent state, Poland was, like most of East-Central Europe, a hotbed of modernist ideas and forms. Schools, styles and sensibilities germinated at a frightening rate, as if driven by a sense of their own impermanence. It was a Dostoevskian world in which the educated classes took Great Ideas a bit too seriously for their own good. It was also a world teetering on the edge of destruction. The awakened nationalisms on the borderless eastern plains did not portend stability. The unfinished Great European War was awaiting its second act. Historical catastrophism in the Europe of those days was an almost universal phenomenon, but it was in the eastern and central regions of the continent that real catastrophes happened regularly. It was in this world, at once euphoric and gloomy, that Witkiewicz settled into the role of its Dark Prince, a famous eccentric and scandalmaker, worshiped by some and denounced by many as an impostor.

Witkiewicz was hardly an original or systematic thinker, but he treated his philosophy very seriously. His numerous plays and his few novels were conceived mainly as case studies of his ontological and aesthetic concepts. His worldview was built around the same metaphysical considerations that culminated in the "philosophy of existence" of Jaspers, Heidegger and Sartre. For Witkiewicz, the central attribute of human existence is its strangeness. Our consciousness is constantly preoccupied with the question "Why?" "Why am I exactly this and not that being? At this point of ultimate space and in this moment of infinite time? In this group of beings, on this planet? Why do I exist, while I could have been without any existence? Why does anything exist at all?" The mystery, the loneliness and the frailty of being is the source of unbearable terror, yet it is also the only thing that makes us capable of higher strivings. Throughout history man has wrestled with this terror of being and turned it into the force of life, through religion, philosophy and art. In the modern era of socialization, mechaniza-

Prostate Cancer
If you or a friend or family member are facing prostate cancer, you do have options. For FREE information call Theragenics Cancer Information Center,
1-800-458-4372

GOVERNMENT FORECLOSED HOMES FOR
pennies on $1. Delinquent Tax, Repo's, REO's. Your Area.
Call Toll Free: 1-800-898-9778
Ext. H-4377 for current listings

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK
At A Price You Can Afford!
$1.97 EACH Size: 5½"x 8½", 64 pgs, 500 copies, 2-color cvr. Negs, Proofs, Perf Bd.
From $529. Write for Price List.
800-277-8960 PROFESSIONAL PRESS
P.O. Box 3581 • Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3581


AUDIO BOOKS
• Rentals by mail
• All Unabridged
• Huge Selection
• 100% Guarantee
BLACKSTONE AUDIO BOOKS
Dept. NE • P.O. Box 969 • Ashland OR 97520
For a FREE Catalogue, Write or Call:
1-800-729-2665

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion and mass civilization, however, "[m]ystery veils dropped away one by one, and the time has come when we see a naked, hard body with nothing more to be taken off, invincible in its dead statue's indifference."

This new civilization can make humanity superficially happy by tending to its material needs through the organization of labor, technology and social engineering. Yet this "happiness for all" can be achieved only through the surrender of the individual and the effacement of all metaphysics—that is, by making man less human. This was the general tendency of history that Witkiewicz, together with many other thinkers of the interwar era, discerned in the political developments of his day. "From a herd we came," he wrote, "... and to a herd we shall return."

The last refuge of the individual, argued Witkiewicz, is art, which in the modern era tries to replace religion and philosophy by evoking metaphysical feelings. Art engages us with the unity of its structure, with Form, rather than with mimesis or verisimilitude or representation. Thus the most effective art consists of Pure Form—such as music or abstract painting—striving to shock modern man out of his complacency by becoming increasingly complex, disjointed and extreme. Witkiewicz was one of the early advocates of abstract art. He believed that literature, too, must aspire to Pure Form, and that it is most likely to approach that ideal through the medium of the theater, where the text is only one of several structural components. Witkiewicz wrote over thirty plays according to this abstract formalist principle. The majority of them were never published, let alone staged, in his life. They were "discovered" and published in a single volume in the early 1960s, when Polish literature was breaking out of its socialist-realist mode and taking a new interest in the local originators of the modern tradition. (Schulz and Gombrowicz also made their Polish reappearance around that time, though the latter only selectively, since his politics were unpalatable to the communist authorities.)

His theories of Pure Form and his theatrical experiments are undoubtedly Witkiewicz's main contribution to modernist poetics. In his departure from the psychology, the setting and the dramatic structure of realism, he ventured further than Pirandello or Gombrowicz. His dramas are rightly considered harbingers of Beckett, Ionesco and the Theater of the Absurd. "When leaving the theater," he wrote in one of his programmatic essays, "one should have the impression that one wakes up from a strange dream, in which the most trite things have the elusive, deep charm characteristic of dreams, not comparable to anything...." This thoroughly cerebral writer made irrationality his main mode of expression and tried to rid his dramas of discursive content. The conflict between his power of mind and his suspicion of mind shows, and it produces surprisingly interesting results. In the best of Witkiewicz's plays we can clearly see, under the guise of Pure Form, the range of his ideas and his private obsessions: metaphysical longings, catastrophist visions of history, sexual fixation and a fascination with death, all tinged with an occasional touch of political or social satire.

An even stranger mixture of elements can be found in Witkiewicz's three finished novels. The writer refused to grant the novel the status of art, considering it a mixed-breed form organically incapable of achieving higher structural unity. So as a novelist he allowed himself more freedom in dealing with his ideas and his preoccupations. *Insatiability* is often interpreted as an extravagant "novel of ideas"—a story of a young man "suffused with the fiery essence of life's weirdness," trying to affirm his identity and to find an answer to his metaphysical "why" in a world in which all the lights—religious, philosophical, artistic—are dimming and dying. The novel has also been read as a Polish version of *Brave New World* or even *1984*, a dark prophecy of the destruction of the individual and the advent of totalitarianism, a warning that was to be fulfilled a mere ten years later.

And yet it is impossible to take *Insatiability* seriously as an exploration of philosophical or political ideas. Among its surreal imagery and its narrative twists there is precious little room for coherent thought. The book's endless discursive passages collapse under their own weight without reaching any conclusion, or they decline into adolescent complaints: "Can *this* be me, is this *my* life unfolding. Oh, why out of a billion possibilities *this* way and not some other way? Oh, God!" The author's sexual phobias become uncomfortably obvious, as the sex scenes grow gratuitously weird and the narrator takes evident pleasure in the constant thrashing and name-calling of the novel's women. What is more, despite Zip's insatiable devouring of raw experience ("I keep wanting to touch everything naked, just as I touch my face with my own bare hand.... I want to change everything so it'll turn out as it should. I want to have it *all*, to choke it, to crush it, squeeze its guts out, torture it...!") everything in the novel—people, situations, ideas—has the feel of cardboard artificiality.

The social and political message of the novel, praised by Witkiewicz's admirers, is dubious at best and even a bit disturbing. Witkiewicz appears to be defending individualism, but he finds this virtue only among the aristocracy of the spirit, that is, in his artists and madmen. And he finds it only in acts of transgression: "By that monstrous crime I liberated myself," Genezip proclaims, like a standard Nietzschean superman. As for ordinary people, they are presented as a "drab, colorless mass of languishing phantoms ... heaving aimlessly about," as "superfluous minibrains," as a "contented machine," as "toiling apes." They are beyond hope. They need to be molded by Kotzmolochowicz's iron will, or to blend into "a homogeneous and stuporous state."

Liberal-minded Polish intellectuals of the '60s tried to use Witkiewicz's dark vision of the mass man as a weapon in their moral struggle with communism; but today it is hard to ignore the writer's antiliberal and antidemocratic views. His charges against "automation," "socialization" and "rule of great numbers" may sound like a quarrel with totalitarian politics, but in his own day such expressions were usually employed to denounce modern civilization in general, including the allegedly soulless, materialistic and diminishing "bourgeois" democracy. In fact, argue Witkiewicz's characters, the decline started with the "vicious democratic lie born of the French Revolution" and culminated in the English industrial revolution. "It was they [the English] who established the greediest, most stultifying, most barbaric state, that built on money—an older version of America which, by its example, has reduced us to a state of sluggish manatees through its perfidious organization of labor."

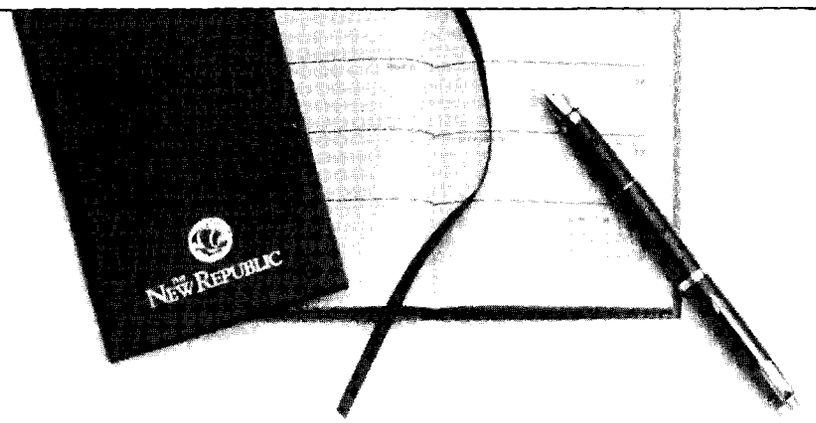
In the years in which this novel was written, such sentiments, often mixed with millenarian despair and metaphysical "longing for the elusive," pushed a legion of yearning souls, from Vienna to Dublin, into the embrace of extreme ideologies. In Witkiewicz's world, fascism and bolshevism are horrifying but inevitable products of the Western civilization. When watched from a slightly elevated position, they even titillate. Genezip feels queasy when he sees his father's workers herded to the living quarters, yet he finds "something erotic" in this spectacle of human degradation. "There they were now, a trailing column that stretched along the road that led from the fac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tory compound to the manor in the pale azure dusk of a fading winter evening broken up by the violet sheaves of light given off by the arc lamps." Witkiewicz kept away from politics and never crossed the line transgressed by Pound, Hamsun, d'Annunzio and numerous other moderns turned fascists or fascist sympathizers. And yet his writing conveys some of the least appealing dispositions of the modernist sensibility.

Unless, of course, *Insatiability* is an immense joke played on that sensibility and on the inflamed literary culture that it produced. Witkiewicz's contemporaries did not detect such a satirical intention in his novel, but this is the direction in which Louis Iribarne, a professor of Slavic languages and literatures at the University of Toronto, seems to be pointing when he says in an interview that the book is "set to bury itself and Western civilization which has given rise to it." Iribarne has translated *Insatiability* with unsurpassed linguistic inventiveness (and not once but twice, since he attempted it first as Czeslaw Milosz's student at Berkeley, with merely three years of Polish under his belt). The parodical element in *Insatiability* is, in his view, unmistakable. How else should we treat sentences such as this: "His ego had collided with the totality of existence in an unutterable spasm, then with that miserable worm known as humanity?" Is Witkiewicz the novelist undermining Witkiewicz the philosopher and aesthete? Is he implying that metaphysical obsession may be not only the justification of existence, but also its deadly poison? The search for metaphysical truths in modern times will bear no fruit, and it will also ineluctably turn into self-mockery, into "metaphysical masturbation," as Genezip has to admit. A novel that attempts to describe such a search can only be a caricature of a novel, a tortured and somewhat unreadable verbal mass embracing everything yet signifying nothing.

It is an attractive interpretation, if only because granting the novel a postmodern intention is about the only way of saving it today. One should not exclude the possibility that Witkiewicz possessed such a great ironic distance from his obsessions. The problem is that those who knew Witkiewicz testify that he treated himself with almost childish seriousness, even when joking. He often surprised his friends with crazy happenings that he staged in his Zakopane villa, involving strange disguises or scatological props, and then he was disappointed when they were amused. He



ANNOUNCING THE NEW REPUBLIC 1997 POCKET DIARY

For the past few years, we have been giving pocket diaries, embossed in gold with THE NEW REPUBLIC name and logo, to our writers and editors and special friends in the media. The diaries have been so popular that we have decided to make them available to our subscribers at a low cost, only $11.95 each.

The diaries are made by Letts of London, whose diaries were favored by Charles Dickens and George Bernard Shaw. Each diary includes weekly calendars with space to write down daily appointments, plus a wine vintage chart, a list of important toll-free telephone numbers, and addresses, and more.

The pages are edged in gilt and carry a silken page marker. The diary itself is dark blue with featherweight light-blue pages.

It's elegant and easy to use. The cost to non-subscribers is $13.95, but we're offering it to subscribers for just $11.95, *including* postage.

AVAILABLE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS FOR A LIMITED TIME

YES, Send me THE NEW REPUBLIC pocket diary immediately. (Please allow 2 to 4 weeks for delivery.)

❑ I am a subscriber, $11.95

❑ I am not a subscriber, $13.95

Name_____

Address _____

City_____ State____ Zip_____

Write to: Pocket Diary, THE NEW REPUBLIC
1220 19th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036

Check or Money-Order must accompany each order

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wanted them to be scandalized, horrified or awed by the profundity of his rebellion.

Perhaps Gombrowicz, hardly a generous judge of his contemporaries, was right when he said that Witkiewicz "ruined himself ... lured by his own demonism, and not knowing how to reconcile the abnormal with the normal. Consequently, he was left at the mercy of his eccentricity. All mannerisms result from the inability to oppose form, a certain manner of being rubs off on us, becomes habit-forming...." Gombrowicz noted elsewhere that Witkiewicz's "human being is grotesque in his spasmodic excitation at his own abyss." It is quite possible, too, that he used humor, self-mockery, theatrical grimaces and irony less to undermine the message of his work than to exorcise his darker demons—the demons of the Central European universe and the more personal ones. For they were tearing at the fabric of his life and art.

These were the demons with which all of them, Gombrowicz, Schulz and Witkiewicz, were struggling. But they struggled differently. Schulz shut himself up himself in his art and built, out of his language and his imagination, a parallel reality. Gombrowicz rejected "monstrousness of metaphysics" and chose an aristocratic, ironic detachment towards the human comedy. Witkiewicz tried to stare "metaphysical horror" in the face, yet hide behind the mask of a jester. Only Gombrowicz survived to see during his lifetime tokens of literary recognition. And only he believed in new beginnings. At the outset of the war he left for Argentina, where he rebuilt his career from scratch. Schulz, unable to abandon his real and imagined Drohobycz, was murdered by the Gestapo. And about Witkiewicz's end, we are left with a mystery.

At the outbreak of the war Witkiewicz was seen walking east to escape the approaching troops of the Third Reich. Eyewitnesses claim that he committed suicide on September 17, 1939, when he learned that the Soviet troops had crossed the Polish border and were moving westward. Recently his roadside grave was exhumed, so as to reinter his remains to a more appropriate place, and the forensic experts discovered that the remains belonged to a young woman. Perhaps she was his companion. But he has vanished. It is tempting to imagine him still roaming out there, the most distraught and the most enigmatic of the great Eastern European madmen.

JAROSLAW ANDERS is a Polish writer living in Washington, D.C.

The Long Journey

BY JOHN SUTHERLAND

Accordion Crimes by E. Annie Proulx

(Scribner, 381 pp., $25)

The praise for E. Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News* was unanimous and superlative. It won a string of important prizes. But literary history is littered with examples of authors stifled by their own success. When you suddenly find yourself at the top, where do you go?

One's curiosity about what Proulx would do next flows from the nature of her work. *The Shipping News* is a fine novel, and it will still look good seventy years from now—unlike, say, Edna Ferber's *So Big*, which also won a Pulitzer Prize. But it is, in the context of late twentieth-century American fiction, a strangely idiosyncratic performance. All writers, even the most original, have literary debts, but Proulx's are not easily identified. *The Shipping News* is created around a Quasimodo *pour nos jours*, the hack journalist Quoyle, who finds meaning to his little life at the outermost rim of the continent, on the stormy Newfoundland coast. In literary historical terms, it was not easy to see where this exuberant diary of an American nobody was coming from. There are some Beckettian inflections, but the nearest contemporary analogy seemed to be John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces*, another work which won great admiration but only after the author killed himself, despairing of finding a publisher who liked his novel enough to print it. Like John Kennedy Toole, Proulx defies easy classification.

After the success of *The Shipping News*, the temptation must have been great to play it again. The pleasing news is that Proulx has not done so. Rather than repeat herself, she has enlarged her theme vastly to take on the biggest subject of all. In her new novel, she sings of America. Of the three terms in the Great American Novel, the trickiest is undoubtedly the middle one. America is not a subject which is easily contained within the dimensions of a single work of fiction.

In *Accordion Crimes*, Proulx has selected an ostentatiously traditional technique for the organization of her narrative. She has gone back to a best-seller of 1765 called *The Adventures of a Guinea*, by Charles Johnstone. Johnstone's novel patented what was to be the most imitated gimmick in late eighteenth-century fiction, and one which is still regularly revived in popular narrative. It follows the course of a gold coin, as it goes randomly from hand to hand, telling the story of each of its successive owners. In Proulx's novel, the traveling object is not a piece of money, but a portable musical instrument.

This formula allows Proulx to work within the structure that she likes best—the collection of short stories, accidentally connected but thematically unified. For all her virtues, she is a short distance writer. One of the few shortcomings of *The Shipping News* was that it lacked an overall architecture, but was instead a series of little riffs and episodes set against a static narrative situation. The device that she adopts in her new novel—the vignette—allows her to play to her strength while composing what is ultimately a panoramic national mosaic. (By my rough count, *Accordion Crimes* has some forty to fifty narratives and central characters.)

The connecting strands in Proulx's long story are the adventures of a small green accordion made by a craftsman in Sicily at the close of the nineteenth century. Proulx relishes the intricacy of those technical jargons that extend language to the limits of its precision. In *The Shipping News* she took as epigraphs to her chapters extracts from *The Ashley Book of Knots*; and, if nothing else, readers will take away from that novel a new awareness of the difference between a "bight," a "snarl," a "mesh" and a "nip." *Accordion Crimes* opens with a lovingly close description of the accordion-maker at work:

> He has cut the grille with a jeweler's saws from a sheet of brass, worked a design of peacocks and olive leaves. The hasps

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and escutcheons that fastened the bellows frames to the case ends, the brass screws, the zinc reed plate, the delicate axle, the reeds themselves, of steel, and the aged Circassian walnut for the case, he had purchased all of these. But he had constructed and fashioned the rest: the V-shaped wired springs with their curled eyes that lay under the keys and returned them to position in the wake of stamping fingers, the buttons, the palette rods. The trenched bellows, the leather valves and gaskets, the skived kidskin gussets, the palette covers, all of these were from a kid whose throat he had cut, whose hide he had tanned with ash lime, brains, and tallow.

It is hard to write as accurately as this. But Proulx goes beyond the functional accuracy of the trade manual and creates poetry. It is not easy to see how it is done, but the nearest analogies that come to mind are those vivid inventorial chapters in *Moby Dick* or, to pluck from the contemporary, the corresponding chapters in William Least Heat-Moon's *PrairyErth*, where for three pages he does nothing but list names of grasses. Proulx, one feels, could find poetry on a ketchup bottle.

The accordion-maker (who is never named, but is clearly—as the sacrifice of the lamb implies—identified with the biblical Abraham) leaves Sicily in 1890 for "La Merica." He takes with him his son Silvano and his instrument. By a series of fatal accidents, the accordion-maker ends up in New Orleans, where, with ten of his Italian compatriots, he is promptly lynched in a riot orchestrated by local community leaders. Welcome to La Merica. The little green accordion passes into the hands of a German immigrant farmer, Hans Beutle, who settles in Iowa. The instrument no longer plays plangent Sicilian melodies, but lusty Teutonic marches and ballads. This is the longest tenure any owner has of the accordion, from 1891 to the late 1920s; it is also the foundation-building phase of American civilization.

Beutle is possessed of titanic physical energy and libidinal drive. (It is worth adding that Proulx can be a very sexy writer when she wants.) Over the decades, the German farmer builds up a prosperous business defying deep-rooted Iowan antagonism against "sourkrauts." It seems like a textbook American success story until Beutle dies ignominiously and agonizingly from post-operative infection following a goat-gland transplant into his sadly enfeebled testicles. In the same week—it is 1929—his fortune is wiped out by the Wall Street crash. American quacks and hucksters have done him in. Forty years of diligence and skilled tilling of the Iowa soil leaves Beutle's family nothing.

"The old green accordion," as it now is, falls into the dexterous hands of a Hispanic virtuoso musician, Abelardo Salazar. We follow its tuneful career through the 1930s and 1940s, as *Tejano* music builds its huge constituency among the migrant underclass. Abelardo is popular but never rich. He is bitten by a venomous spider and neglected to death by the American health system. When she tells the clinic orderly that her husband is very sick, Abelardo's wife, Adina, is brushed off: "The doctor is at the hospital at a meeting. If you people would make appointments instead of just crowding in like this, instead of just coming in without an appointment." Abelardo is taken home to die in front of a "droning television."

It is now the 1950s and the tempo accelerates. The accordion spends some time with Franco-Canadian owners before going south to Louisiana, where zydeco is born from its now wheezy bellows. In the 1960s, it is briefly in the possession of African Americans in the civil rights struggle. Polka-playing Poles and melancholy Minnesotan Norwegians have their turn before the old, exhausted accordion finally attains its quietus in the 1990s. Its successive ownerships transport us inside a dizzying series of ethnic groups—all musical in their different ways, all ethnically distinct but nonetheless all quintessentially "American." Foreignness does not melt in Proulx's America, it gradually erodes into the recognizable here and now. She is very good at registering the gains and losses of what the INS calls "naturalization"—becoming natural. The magic of the accordion is that, like America, it can absorb all styles, all cultural idioms. And, like America, the accordion is profoundly delusive. Most of its various owners have been dirt poor, blissfully unaware that in its passage through America the instrument has acquired a hidden store of thousands of dollar bills in the recesses of its pleats. Proulx loves irony.

I seem to recall that somewhere in America there was something like an "accordion awareness week." Largely owing to its indelibly proletarian character, it is a much-maligned instrument. As the Victrola brought common people the privilege of hearing orchestral music in their homes, so the accordion brought them the power of cheaply making it. But, unlike the saxophone (which was also once a proletarian instrument), the accordion has never been admitted into the classical instrumental ensemble. It is even despised by jazz musicians. Ask even musically cultivated people to name a famous accordionist and you will draw a blank. (If they think hard, they may come up with Edith Piaf.) It is still stigmatized and *déclassé*, an instrument of the folk incapable of anything higher than the vulgarest folk music.

It is significant that Proulx did not call her novel *Adventures of an Accordion*, but *Accordion Crimes*. "Behind every great fortune there lies a crime," wrote Balzac; and his epigram has been taken as the epigraph to two great studies of America, C. Wright Mills's *The Power Elite* and Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*. The theme of Proulx's novel is that behind every great country, specifically behind the great United States, there lies ubiquitous crime. The roots of that crime she locates in xenophobia, racism and the economic exploitation that keeps the accordion-playing classes in servitude.

The little histories that make up Proulx's national chronicle are a catalog of broken families, of disillusionment, of premature death, of industrial accident, of death in meaningless foreign wars. Put that way, it may sound as if *Accordion Crimes* is an angry novel or a political one. It is not. The strongest impression one takes from the lives that Proulx chronicles is vitality—life itself. Her work demonstrates the paradox—found at its most extreme in tragedy—that the unbearably sad can be aesthetically pleasing and morally uplifting. But the fact remains; no American life ends happily in *Accordion Crimes*.

There was little doubt after *The Shipping News* that Proulx was a good novelist. The earlier novel's scale was miniature, but she had come to terms with that most difficult of American bequests—the Melvillean rhetoric. Looking back, it seems clear that in *The Shipping News* Proulx was shaping the instrument for *Accordion Crimes*; it is not accidental that this image dominates the opening of this last novel. It is easy for critics to make fools of themselves with grandiose claims; but in scale, in vision and in imaginative daring, *Accordion Crimes* uses all the range and the resources of Proulx's mature prose. It is now safe to assert that she is a great novelist. It is a pity that she won all those prizes with the last novel; she deserves to win them again.

JOHN SUTHERLAND is Lord Northcliffe Professor of Modern English Literature at University College, London. His latest book is *Is Heathcliff A Murderer? Puzzles in Nineteenth Century Fiction* (Oxford University Press).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LOS ANGELES DIARIST

Split personality

I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TALK CRITIcally about Tupac Shakur since he died last week, but I find myself eulogizing him instead. I suppose it's natural given the terrible way he died. But I'm convinced it's more than just the glamour of gangland murder leaving an urban legend in its wake. I've never liked gangster rap, have railed against its perversions more times than I can remember, but Shakur, chief among its practitioners, always fascinated me. I didn't like him, he was a misogynist and a convicted rapist, but affection is not a prerequisite for grief.

MY REACTION TO HIS DEATH SURprised me. I found out at work, an hour after it was announced. A black friend told me, staring at the floor while she did. The news left me stunned, in a state of nervous distraction that I realized later was loss.

I REMEMBER WATCHING AN INTERview with Shakur several years ago and wondering why I was at once so riveted and so irritated by him. Among other things I couldn't figure out if he reminded me more of my cousin or my brother. But when my sister called hours after he died, and then my younger brother too, I realized it was exactly this confusion that made him so compelling. One could never escape the feeling with Shakur that he was not one self, but many varied selves, each striving to subdue and not to be subdued. It was this variety, this inability to sustain a single self, that made him pull at so many different people: no matter who you were he could find a face to charm you. My pastor said the Sunday after his death, "I didn't agree with his lifestyle, but something about that boy touched me."

IT WAS THIS SAME VARIETY, HOPElessly unreconciled inside him, that caused him to live so destructively. Shakur was born a month after his mother, Afeni Shakur, was released from prison, acquitted on bombing charges with the Black Panthers. He never knew his father. His best friend in school was killed by gunfire. But, in spite of all this, Shakur studied acting and ballet at the High School for the Performing Arts in Baltimore and later attended the upscale Tamalpais High School in Marin County. "He wasn't a gangster when he lived out here with us," said someone who knew him then.

MORE THAN ANY OTHER RAPPER, Shakur led a publicly violent life. But his criminality always seemed like proof that he really wasn't a criminal, that it was an act, something he was trying hard to convince you of. Real gangsters don't want the attention. Shakur craved it. The rape charges, prison term and gun wounds notwithstanding, no one believed him when he said he was a thug for life. He was a thug for the camera. It was these competing identities that brought about his desperate acts of self-sabotage. And you could see it in everything about him.

HE WAS STUNNINGLY HANDSOME. He had the type of features that both men and women notice—solid black skin, massive eyebrows, long, curved lashes, cheekbones miles high. He was the singularly most arresting artist in rap music. But, in that industry, soft, delicate features do little to help your reputation as a hard-core practitioner of the form. I couldn't help but think that the tattoos that covered his front and back, the nose ring and the flagrant way he courted physical abuse was a means of clawing away at the pretty-boy image that dogged him. He was stunningly talented. John Singleton's movie *Poetic Justice* was a commercial and critical failure, but it opened big when it was released. Singleton had Janet Jackson to thank for that. But it was Shakur who made the movie tolerable, so sly and knowing was his work. He did what all great actors do when they find the rest of the cast has deserted them—played his part to the hilt and ignored Rome burning around him. But Shakur would not sustain even that integrity for long. There are moments in the movie where he transforms a lustful gaze into a lecherous one or a smile into a sneer with such ferocity and speed that it frightens and amazes at once. Shakur could have been great, but he would have had to choose which of the many selves he hated the least and started his life from there.

MY COUSIN IS A LEADER, MY brother is a follower, but both of them are hoodlums. Small time, to be sure, but in and out of jail enough that the distinction doesn't matter. Given the relatively new invention of the black middle class, every black family has a male relative (at least one) who knows what the inside of a prison looks like. And, though some of them are menaces to society, many are men who just can't seem to get things right. That's what it always seemed like for Shakur; it wasn't that he didn't want to do right, he just couldn't help doing wrong. "I felt like I couldn't get out," he said, "like an evil force had wrapped itself around me and wouldn't let me go."

I RAN THE STREETS OF CHICAGO ten years ago, smashing windows, stealing cars, running from the cops. But I went home, to the South, when summer was over. And though we could have been jailed, beaten up or worse, my cousins and I harbored no more rage or enmity than other kids do at that age. It's just that in the projects fun and danger are hard to separate.

I VISITED CHICAGO THREE YEARS ago when my grandmother died. My cousin and a friend of his drove me around a neighborhood I hadn't seen in years. The cops stopped us. The friend was arrested. There was a gun in the car, but they didn't find it. It was grown-up business, and I was afraid. My cousin wasn't, and all he did was laugh as I cursed his name. But he was my cousin, the same hard-headed punk I grew up with. For a moment I could see that for him nothing had changed since we were little. It still seemed like a game.

MY BROTHER WAS AS SMART AS I am and better looking besides; he had a charm that I couldn't match. I suppose there are explanations for the way his life has turned out ... he fell in with the wrong crowd, he hated himself, he wanted to define himself against me, and so on and so on, but they don't really satisfy. It's the same with Tupac.

EVERYONE BLACK KNOWS SOMEone like him. So the grief of the black community is real, but it is a grief that will not transmogrify. Under healthy conditions, grief like this would cauterize into rage—rage at the perpetrators of the crime. But the slaying of black men by other black men has become ritualized in the black community, and we are too afraid or too ashamed to announce clearly and unequivocally that murder is not an acceptable way to make others answer for their crimes. I don't want a scholarship named after Tupac, don't want a plaque honoring him as a hero, don't want benefit concerts in his memory. I just want black people to stop dying this way. Bury him and inter this evil with his bones.

CINQUE HENDERSON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Virgin territory. He's not one who's comfortable with boundaries. Publisher. Record mogul. Airline owner. He's been there. Done that. Turning one risky business venture after another into a multibillion dollar empire. And along the way, he's parlayed his informal style and love of adventure into one of the most powerful brand names in marketing history. *Virgin*. The promise of value and good fun. And when he's not busy pinching market share from bigger brands, you can find him plotting a way to land in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. For the fourth time. **Richard Branson picked up his first copy of Forbes aboard a trans-Atlantic flight in 1972.**

Forbes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BECAUSE WE RECYCLE OVER 100 MILLION PLASTIC BOTTLES A YEAR, LANDFILLS CAN BE FILLED WITH OTHER THINGS. LIKE LAND, FOR INSTANCE.

We can't make more land. But we can do more to protect what we have. In fact, last year Phillips Petroleum's plastics recycling plant processed over 100 million containers. This effort reduced landfill waste and helped conserve natural resources. And that left another little corner of the world all alone. At Phillips, that's what it means to be The Performance Company.

PHILLIPS PETROLEUM COMPANY

For an annual report on Phillips' health, environmental and safety performance, write to: HES Report, 16 A1 PB, Bartlesville, OK 74004.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED